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ABSTRACT

This guide is a collection of practical ideas for teaching vocabulary and vocabulary development skills to learners of a second language. Most are contributed by teachers of English as a Second Language, but the activities may be appropriate for teaching other languages. Each idea is described briefly, with information given about appropriate proficiency level(s), specific aims, class time requirements, preparation time, needed resources, procedures, and caveats and options. An introductory section offers background information on principles of vocabulary teaching and learning. Subsequent sections contain classroom activities for: meeting new vocabulary for the first time (receptive and productive use, words within texts); establishing previously met vocabulary (revising words, working with definitions, word-action relationships, revising words in sentences); enriching previously met vocabulary (associations and lexical sets, collocations, and enriching meaning and productive use); developing vocabulary strategies (guessing words in context, word building, using dictionaries, giving learners control); and developing fluency with known vocabulary. (MSE)

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New Ways in TESOL Series
Innovative Classroom Techniques
Jack C. Richards, Series Editor

[ew Ways in Teaching Vocabulary

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New Ways in Teaching Vocabulary

Paul Nation, Editor

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Innovative Classroom Techniques

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Contents

Introduction iv
Users' Guide to Activities x
Part I: Meeting New Vocabulary for the First Time 1
Receptive Use 6
Receptive Use: Individualized Work 20
Productive Use 27
Words in Texts 45
Part II: Establishing Vocabulary 57
Revising Words 61
Working With Definitions 78
Words and Actions 97
Revising Words in Sentences 103
Part III: Enriching Activities 119
Associations and Lexical Sets 123
Collocations 146
Enriching Meaning and Productive Use 155
Part IV: Developing Vocabulary Strategies 171
Guessing Words in Context 175
Word Building 182
Using Dictionaries 191
Giving Learners Control 197
Part V: Developing Fluency With Known Vocabulary 205

Introduction

There are several strong reasons for which the vocabulary component of a language course needs to be carefully planned. Several of the points raised here are dealt with in more detail in the introductions to the various sections of the book.

Firstly, because different vocabulary gives greatly different returns for learning, it is important to make sure that the learners have good control of the high frequency words of the language before moving on to the less frequent vocabulary. In addition, the focus of teaching for high frequency vocabulary is different from the focus of teaching for low frequency vocabulary. A good vocabulary learning program should therefore focus on the appropriate level of vocabulary for the learners and should do this in the appropriate way.

Secondly, most language teaching courses make vocabulary learning more difficult than it should be as a result of the way vocabulary in the course is sequenced. Grouping opposites, synonyms, and items in a lexical set together causes interference that results in confusion for the learners. It is a simple matter to avoid this problem.

Thirdly, vocabulary learning opportunities and the quality of vocabulary learning can be greatly increased through the careful design of both vocabulary and other skill activities. Let us look at an example of this.

In a detailed study of negotiation and vocabulary learning from communication activities, Newton (1993) found that all of the negotiated vocabulary in the activity occurred in the written input to the activity and that the negotiation of the meaning of words contributed significantly to their learning. This vocabulary learning occurred even though the learners' attention was focused on the communication activity and its solution. Newton's findings have several implications for teachers.

1. The written input (the sheets given to the learners) in a communication activity such as ranking or problem solving are the means of

determining what vocabulary will receive special attention from the learners during the activity. These sheets should be carefully designed and their effects monitored to provide the best opportunity for the learners to make use of the new vocabulary they contain.

2. Teachers should not be overly concerned if some learners are not participating a lot in the communication activities. Newton (1993) found that learners who observed the negotiation learned as well as those who actually performed the negotiation.
3. Communication activities can be a major source of planned, indirect vocabulary learning.

Table 1 is an overview, based on Nation (1990), that can be the basis for teachers to evaluate and develop the vocabulary component of their language teaching program. Most of the points in the table are covered in the following parts of this introduction and in the introductions to the various sections of this book.

This book has been divided into the following sections to reflect the major components of a language learning course:

1. Meeting new vocabulary for the first time
2. Establishing previously met vocabulary
3. Enriching previously met vocabulary
4. Developing vocabulary strategies
5. Developing fluency with known vocabulary

Meeting New Vocabulary for the First Time

There are no generally accepted figures for the rate at which learners should meet new vocabulary in a language course. This is most likely the result of the widely differing conditions under which English is learned throughout the world. But meeting new words through formal presentation in a language course is only one of the ways to meet new vocabulary. Another very important way is through extensive reading and extensive listening. During extensive reading, including reading of simplified texts or graded readers, new words should not be met at a rate greater than one or two new words per hundred known running words if learners are

Table 1. Evaluating the Vocabulary Component of an ESL Program

What to Look For	How to Look for It	How to Include It
Does the teacher know what the learners' vocabulary level and needs are?	Ask the teacher	Use the levels test (Nation, 1990) Interview the learners
Is the program focusing appropriately on the appropriate level of vocabulary?	Look at what vocabulary or strategies are being taught	Decide whether the focus is high, academic, or low frequency vocabulary
Is the vocabulary helpfully sequenced?	Check that opposites, near synonyms, lexical sets are not being presented in the same lesson	Use texts and normal use to sequence the vocabulary
Are the skill activities designed to help vocabulary learning?	Look at the written input to the activities Ask the teacher	Include and monitor wanted vocabulary in the written input
Is there a suitable proportion of opportunities to develop fluency with known vocabulary?	Look at the amount of graded reading, listening to stories, free writing and message-based speaking	Use techniques that develop well-beaten paths and rich maps
Does the presentation of vocabulary help learning?	Look for deliberate repetition and spacing Rate the activities for depth of processing	Develop teaching and revision cycles Choose a few deep processing techniques to use often
Are the learners excited about their progress?	Watch the learners doing tasks Ask the learners	Set goals Give feedback on progress Keep records

to gain pleasure from reading. At this rate in a typical middle-level graded reader, a learner could expect to meet roughly 50–70 new words (Wodinsky & Nation, 1988). Elley's (1989) research on learning vocabulary through listening to stories shows that this enjoyable activity can be a useful means of vocabulary learning, particularly if the person reading aloud or telling the story gives the new words a little attention such as briefly explaining them or noting them on the board without interrupting the story too much.

We have seen that new vocabulary can be met in communicative activities and that the written input for these activities can be an effective source of new vocabulary.

Finally, in the classroom, new vocabulary can be met in activities where the learners work individually, or in pairs or small groups to reach the outcome of a self-motivating task.

Establishing Previously Met Vocabulary

There is an important distinction between communicating the meaning of unknown vocabulary and learning new vocabulary. Although some words may be learned after one meeting, this is exceptional. Although a teacher may clearly communicate the meaning of a word, that does not ensure the word will be learned. To assist learning, further meetings will be necessary.

Very few coursebooks build spaced repetition of the target vocabulary into the course. It is left to the teacher to make sure that the target vocabulary is established and that the time and effort that went into initially presenting the vocabulary is not wasted through the absence of later attention.

This repetition of vocabulary can be added to a course in several complementary ways:

- by setting aside class time for revision, for example reviewing learners' vocabulary notebooks
- by periodically and systematically testing previously met vocabulary and following up on the results and

- by planning the recycling of previously met vocabulary through pair and group activities.

Enriching Previously Met Vocabulary

One reason for which it is difficult to learn a word from one encounter is that there are many things to know about a word: As what part of speech can it function? What range of meanings can it have? What is its core meaning? What prefixes and suffixes can it take? With what other words does it collocate? What grammatical patterns does it fit into? What particular positive and negative associations does it have? Is it a frequently used word or an infrequently used word?

The answers to these questions come from meeting and having to use the word in a variety of new contexts.

Developing Vocabulary Strategies

In addition to learning new vocabulary, learners need to be able to use strategies to cope with unknown vocabulary met in listening or reading texts, to make up for gaps in productive vocabulary in speaking and writing, to gain fluency in using known vocabulary, and to learn new words in isolation. Most of these strategies can begin to be developed in the earliest English classes. The time spent on them is well repaid by the amount of use the learners will find for them.

Developing Fluency With Known Vocabulary

Vocabulary learning is not an end in itself. A rich vocabulary makes the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing easier to perform. Learners' growth in vocabulary must be accompanied by opportunities to become fluent with that vocabulary. This fluency can be partly achieved through activities that lead to the establishment and enrichment of vocabulary knowledge, but the essential element in developing fluency lies in the opportunity for the meaningful use of vocabulary in tasks with a low cognitive load.

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Users' Guide to Activities

Part I: Meeting New Vocabulary for the First Time

Receptive Use

Newton, J.: Learning Vocabulary Through Ranking Tasks 6
Miller, L.: Arranging Students Into Groups Using Vocabulary 8
Spencer, D.: Learning Vocabulary With Cards 11
Malinowski, J. M.: Real Words From the Real World 12
Pepperle, D.: Listening to the News Headlines 14
Nation, P.: Guess the Meaning 15
Dean, R.: Matching Exercises 16
Le, V.: Words and the World 18

Receptive Use: Individualized Work

Nation, P.: One More Sentence 20
James, M.: Enrichment Packets 22
Nation, P.: Peer Teaching 24
Nation, P.: Words in Code 25
Nation, P.: Individualized Picture Matching 26

Productive Use

Li, D. C.: State It, Say It, and Erase It 27
Lange, E.: Occupations 29
Spencer, D., Biles, W.: Let's Go Shopping 31
Lange, E., Park, J.: Vocabulary Keys for Interaction 33
Foley, K. S.: Co-occurrences in English 35
Nixon, T.: A to Z Vocabulary 37
Kilgore, M.: Ghost Story 39
Mahoney, D.: Stars and Signs 41
Davidson-Maxwell, C.: Whattya Hear? 43

Words in Texts

Newton, J.: Read and Retell 45
South, C.: Idioms in Popular Music 47
Lewis, M.: The Vocabulary of the Newspapers 49
Joe, A.: Retelling Texts to Learn New Vocabulary 51
Setliff, R.: Vocabulary in News Broadcasts 53
Verivaki, M.: Find the Technical Words 55

Part II: Establishing Vocabulary

Revising Words

Braverman, J.: Calendar Fun 61
Mahoney, D.: Word Shapes 64
Sheen, R.: Repetition Made Enjoyable 65
Folse, K. S.: Secret Word 67
Mahoney, D.: Playing Tennis 69
Park, J.: Close the Gap 71
Rutledge, H.: ESL Scrabble 72
Battaglia, N.: Vocabulary Bingo 74
Lange, E.: Computer-Assisted Vocabulary Review With Hangman 76

Working With Definitions

Joe, A.: Guess My Word 78
Lange, E.: Pair Crosswords With Hangman 80
Murray, H.: Guess the Word 81
Nation, P.: Split Vocabulary 83
Rutledge, H.: Matching Synonyms 84
Griffiths, C.: Twenty Questions 86
Mannon, T. M.: Draw-a-Word Game 87
Millett, S.: Listening/Speaking Crosswords for Vocabulary Practice 89
Nation, P.: Find the Sentence 92
Jackup, R.: Find the Right Definition 93
Brown, D.: Define and Match 94

Words and Actions

Braverman, J.: Total Physical Response Vocabulary Practice 97

Braverman, J.: Total Physical Response Verb Practice 99
Lange, E.: Hit the Word 100
Park, J.: Who's My Partner? 101

Revising Words in Sentences

Mahoney, D.: Back-to-Back 103
Mannon, T. M.: Vocabulary Match-Ups and Sentence Writing 105
Lange, E.: Vocabulary Exchange Game 106
Hilder, J.: Verb Group Game 108
Jackup, R.: Writing Definitions 110
Halstead, J. D.: Tic-Tac-Toe for Vocabulary Review 111
Folse, K. S.: Scrambled Idioms in an Envelope 113
Murray, H.: Two-Step Recycling Cards 116

Part III: Enriching Activities

Associations and Lexical Sets

Jackup, R.: Word Maps 123
Jackup, R.: Understanding Occupations 125
Folse, K. S.: Flexible Odd Man Out 126
Harsch, K.: Vocabulary Enrichment Through Word Association 128
Jackup, R.: Connections 130
Jackup, R.: Missing Words 131
Murray, H.: Sorting Words as Review 132
Foley, K. S.: Odd Man Out and Nonverbal Communication 134
Jackup, R.: The Story Behind the Picture 136
Alvarado, C. S.: Multiple Meanings 137
Holisky, D. A. et al.: Creating Minidomains 139
Holisky, D. A. et al.: Teaching Vocabulary Through Word Domains 141
Holisky, D. A. et al.: Sense or Nonsense? 144

Collocations

Jackup, R.: Containers 146
Hirsh, D.: Matching Activity 147
Schmitt, N.: Collocation Bingo 148

Ball, W. E.: Collocation Dominoes 151
Hudson, S., Jenkins, S.: Using Shareware Software 153

Enriching Meaning and Productive Use

Miller, L.: Mind Benders 155
Nation, P.: What Is It? 157
Schmitt, N.: More than Meaning 158
Safari, V.: Demonstrating Nuances 161
Bray, E.: Follow Your Character 162
Zimmerman, C. B.: Story Retelling 164
Sheen, R.: Discovering Meaning Constraints 166
Nation, P.: Vocabulary Ranking 168

Part IV: Developing Vocabulary Strategies

Guessing Words in Context

Safari, V.: Nonsense Words 175
Ho, J.: Learning From Examples 176
Harsch, K.: If You Know What It Means, Prove It 178
Lay, N. D. S.: Guessing From Context 179

Word Building

Schmitt, N.: Word Family Practice 182
Nation, P.: Peer Teaching Prefixes 183
Jackup, R.: Word Building 184
Shameem, N.: Prefixes: A Word Game 185
Kilgore, M.: Word Formation Game 187
Verivaki, M.: Find the Prefixes and Suffixes 190

Using Dictionaries

Boyce, M.: Using the Dictionary: Common Words, Uncommon Usage 191
Brown, D.: Think, Consult, Compare 193
Nation, P.: Using the Dictionary to Produce Sentences 194
Rutledge, H.: Using a Dictionary of Synonyms 195

Giving Learners Control

Murray, H.: Learners' Choice 197
Jackup, R.: Keeping a Vocabulary Book 198
Colabucci, P.: Student-to-Student Vocabulary Teaching 199
Hirsh, D.: Vocabulary Cards 201
Hirsh, D.: The Keyword Technique 202
Harsch, K.: In Other Words (A Paraphrasing Game) 203

Part V: Developing Fluency With Known Vocabulary

Zhang, D.: Vocabulary Exercises 209
Wong, M.: What Did They Say 212
Dean, R.: Say That Again 213
Sheen, R.: Using Maps for Practice 214
Tsang, W.: Listen Very Carefully 216

Part I: Meeting New Vocabulary for the First Time

Editor's Note

The activities in this section focus mainly on the initial presentation of new vocabulary. Many of them draw on the use of reading texts, advertisements, news broadcasts and tape recordings to bring the outside world into the classroom.

There are two important cautions that need to be considered when presenting new vocabulary. The first relates to which words are given attention in the classroom. This is a caution regarding *selection*. The second relates to the order in which items are dealt with. This is a caution regarding *sequencing*.

Selecting Vocabulary to Teach

On the basis of frequency studies of vocabulary, a distinction is usually drawn between high frequency and low frequency vocabulary. High frequency vocabulary consists of words that are used very often in normal language use in all four skills and across the full range of situations of use. It consists of most of the function words of English (e.g., *the, because, could, to*) and the most common content words (e.g., *agree, time, slow, sometimes*). Although the distinction between high and low frequency words is arbitrary, recent research confirms that the most sensible place to make the distinction is around the 2,000-word level (Hwang & Nation, forthcoming). This means that we regard the high frequency vocabulary as consisting of about 2,000 word families. These 2,000 words are used so often that they make up about 87% of the running words in formal written texts and more than 95% of the words in informal spoken texts.

The low frequency words on the other hand are a very large group. Estimates based on *Webster's Third International Dictionary* indicate that this group includes well over 100,000 word families. They cover only a small proportion of the running words of a continuous text.

Clearly the return to the learner from teaching high frequency words is much greater than the return from teaching low frequency words. It is thus very important that teachers are aware of the words that make up

the high frequency words of English (Michael West's (1953) *General Service List* is still a reliable source), and that teachers give classroom time to high frequency words.

When the high frequency words are well known, then teachers may wish to spend time on low frequency words. Generally it is wiser to use the time to train learners in strategies that allow them to cope with and learn this vocabulary independent of a teacher. These strategies include guessing from context, using word parts, using word cards along with mnemonic techniques like the keyword technique.

Teachers should look carefully at any vocabulary learning activity they use and see if they are spending time on the high frequency vocabulary. If most of the vocabulary in the activity is low frequency vocabulary, their time and their learners' time might be better spent on other items.

Grouping New Vocabulary in Lessons

Research by Higa (1963) shows that learning near synonyms, opposites, and free associates in the same lesson makes learning more difficult. Thus teaching a pair of words like *hot* and *cold*, *open* and *shut*, *prevent* and *protect*, *table* and *chair* makes learning more difficult. This difficulty is caused by the similarity between the two items strengthening their association, and the differences interfering with each other. This means that as a result of teaching *prevent* and *protect* together, learners get confused and some may think *protect* means "prevent," and *prevent* means "protect" and are uncertain whether you should say *protect someone from bad weather* or **prevent someone from bad weather*. This possibility for interference and confusion occurs when both of the words are new for the learners. In order to avoid such interference such items should be separated from each other so that one of them is taught first (*prevent* is the most frequent) and then some time later, perhaps several weeks, the other is taught.

There is also direct evidence to show the negative effect of teaching words in a "lexical set" like the names of fruit, days of the week, parts of the kitchen, adjectives of emotion (Tinkham, 1993) through encouraging interference between the words in a set. Such interference is largely avoided if words are taught according to their frequency of occurrence, with high frequency words taught before lower frequency words, or if words are taught as they occur in normal written and spoken discourse.

Presenting New Vocabulary

The "levels of processing" theory of learning (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Craik & Tulving, 1975) suggests that a very important factor in learning is the quality of mental activity in the brain of the learner at the moment the learning occurs. If this activity is at a deep and thoughtful level, the learning will remain for a long time. If the activity is shallow and mechanical, little learning will occur.

It is thus useful for a teacher to consider the possible depth of processing that a particular vocabulary activity could give rise to. If the activity does not give rise to deep and thoughtful processing, it is worthwhile replacing the activity with one that does, or adapting it in some way. Deep and thoughtful processing can result from:

- relating the new word to previous knowledge
- having to create a context for the word
- drawing on a range of clues to recall the word
- having to appropriately relate the word to a variety of aspects
- using the word in a goal directed activity like solving problems.

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♦ Receptive Use

Learning Vocabulary Through Ranking Tasks

Levels
Any

Aims
Use new vocabulary in interaction
Develop reasoning skills
Speak with greater fluency

Class Time
30–40 minutes

Preparation Time
15–30 minutes

Resources
A list of items, people, events, activities to be ranked

Ranking tasks are a popular way of encouraging interaction between language learners. Although many published ranking tasks are available, it is not difficult to design new tasks to include vocabulary that is relevant to the needs of particular learners and that covers part of a given syllabus. Ranking tasks integrated into classwork in this way have a more obvious learning rationale. In the discussion which follows, the caveats and options provide the important ideas.

Procedure

1. In groups, get the learners to read through the list of items that are to be ranked and discuss comprehension problems that may arise.
2. During a short silent period, have students begin their own ranking and consider the criteria that are most important to them.
3. Ask learners to work toward consensus on a single ranking through group discussion.
4. Under teacher direction, have groups share their final ranking with the class. These rankings may be placed on a grid on a black/white board for comparison between groups. No one right answer is required.

Caveats and Options

1. Research shows that learners will make an effort to clarify unfamiliar words in a ranking task because the process of ranking requires both knowledge of, and deep thinking about, the items in question. Research also shows that as a result of clarifying unfamiliar words and then using them repeatedly and meaningfully to complete the task, these words are likely to be learned. A ranking task therefore

provides effective opportunities for learners to gain control over new words. For these reasons, the content of the task should contain important and useful vocabulary.

2. Items should not be numbered or labeled to encourage learners to refer to items directly rather than simply referring to a number or label.
3. Because each learner in a group of four will bring knowledge of different vocabulary to the task, they should be encouraged to help each other clarify the meaning of words (in Step 1 above) before calling on the teacher's assistance.
4. The list of items to be ranked can be divided among group members to encourage them to practice saying the items and listening to each other.
5. Ranking tasks involve reasoning and expressing opinions and disagreement. With learners of lower proficiency, it may be useful to preteach some key vocabulary and structures that perform these language functions (e.g., *If . . . then . . .; I think . . . because . . .; That's a good point, but what about . . .*).
6. A learning focus can be integrated into a ranking task by asking learners to rank various study and learning techniques according to how effective each is.
7. A linguistic focus can be integrated into a ranking task by asking learners to rank a list of phrases according to the degree of politeness or appropriateness.

Contributor

Jonathan Newton has taught in China and at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand, where he has been for the past 6 years. He recently completed his PhD.

Arranging Students Into Groups Using Vocabulary

Levels
Any

Aims
Study unfamiliar or unusual vocabulary activities
Use unfamiliar or unusual vocabulary to create small-group activities

Class Time
5 minutes

Preparation Time
5–10 minutes

Resources
Thesaurus (teacher's resource)
Dictionaries (learners' resource)

As language teachers, we often control the vocabulary used in a lesson, especially with low-level students. However, students are frequently intrigued to learn some new words that are not part of the lesson, and often the more bizarre the vocabulary, the more interested the students become.

When preparing students to begin group work, the standard procedure is usually one of the following:

- students are given a number 1,2,3,4; 1,2,3,4 . . .
- the students are arranged into a group by the teacher, "Leo, Ahmed and Pong in one group" (there is usually a reason behind this type of arrangement);
- the students organize themselves into groups

The following is a way of organizing group work (a feature of most English language teaching these days) by using unusual or unfamiliar vocabulary.

Procedure

1. Look at the lesson and try to find a topic or theme. There may be more than one topic in a lesson, and there may be more than one group activity. Then, look up the topic in a thesaurus and find four or five words associated with it. For instance, the topic may be Family, and we may want to introduce some synonyms, so we could choose *brood, folk, kin, clan, tribe*.
2. When it is time for group work tell the students that you are going to give each person an unusual word and that they should try to remember it.

3. Then go around the class saying each of the words in sequence out loud.
4. After each student has been given a word tell them you want them to organize themselves into groups according to which word they received and say "All the people with *brood* make a group," etc. The students rarely forget the word they have been given as they hear it several times, and the organization into groups is done immediately after hearing the words.
5. After the groups have been formed, quickly write the words on the board and group them together under the topic:

6. Once the students have had a look at the words and perhaps pronounced them again once or twice, clean the board and begin the group work.

Caveats and Options

1. Ask the students to copy down the unusual words in a special section of their notebooks and do occasional revision practice.
2. This technique of introducing unusual or unfamiliar vocabulary does seem to be going against the grain of popular language teaching in that students are saying words they do not understand. However, I have found that students I have used this technique with look forward to the unusual group of words thrown into the lesson. The words do not have to be very unusual, it depends on the level of the students.

   The following are some possible word groups:

   - Hyponyms
     e.g., Family: mother, father, brother, sister.
   - Synonyms
     e.g., Holiday: break, leave, recess, time off.
   - Collocates
     e.g., Exam: pass, fail, sit, mock.

- Sound and spelling
  e.g., -ough: rough, dough, bough, cough.

Contributor

Lindsay Miller is a lecturer in the English Department at City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. He has taught English in Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia for the past 14 years. Arthur McNeill commented on and added to this idea.

Learning Vocabulary With Cards

Levels
Any

Aims
Create personal dictionaries

Class Time
10–20 minutes

Preparation
10–20 minutes

Resources
Assigned textbooks, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, library books

Contributor

Procedure

1. Get the students to read a story or article from a textbook or a newspaper.
2. Dictate words from the story to be highlighted for vocabulary study.
3. Get the students to listen to the radio or television.
4. Dictate words from the radio or TV program for vocabulary study.
5. Show the students how to write each new word on an index card (one word per card), with the word divided into syllables, with the part of speech, the meaning, and a sentence containing the word.
6. The students work in pairs or groups with their individual stack of cards. One group or person asks, "What is the word form for . . .?" "What is the meaning of . . .?" Monitor the activity.

Caveats and Options

1. Have a card exchange day.
2. Have a competition based on questioning about the words.

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Real Words From the Real World

Levels
Any

Aims
Work interactively
Expand vocabulary and vocabulary awareness

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

This activity gets students more involved in the learning process, and provides new vocabulary that is more interesting, varied, and useful than is provided by most textbooks. The method is adaptable for all levels and ages as well as different group sizes and time schedules. The student-taught lessons are sometimes serious and sometimes hilarious. The teacher must have a thick skin because sometimes students bring in words that are rude or related to sexual or bathroom activities. These are words they have encountered in real life, and they need to know how to use them (or avoid them). The lessons can lead to broader discussions of current word problems. A lesson on the word *condom* has led to discussions of abortion and AIDS. Such discussions can be vehicles for learning more vocabulary and developing cross-cultural understanding.

Procedure

1. Give the students a weekly assignment for which each brings in one new word or phrase that they have encountered during the week. These words may be from any nonacademic source: conversations, television, films, songs, signs, books, magazines or newspapers. Students must teach their new words or phrases to their classmates. They must include the pronunciation, correct spelling, and meaning(s), as well as the sentence or context in which they found the word or phrase. Any teaching method, except translation, is allowable. This might include (but is not limited to) bringing in an object, drawing a picture, acting out a movement or story, playing a tape, or simply explaining.
2. Classmates may ask questions or provide additional information or examples to add to the understanding of the word or phrase. A lesson on *come on* might lead to the various meanings of this two-word

combination, other combinations of *come* + preposition(s), and the great variety of such idiomatic expressions in English. Monitor the discussion and also add further information concerning cognates, word histories, or related expressions, depending on the level of the students.

Caveats and Options

Train the learners to use a set procedure to present their words to make sure that all important aspects are covered. The questioners can also draw on set questions.

Contributor

Janan M. Malinowski is Lecturer in ESL at Hawaii Community College and the University of Hawaii at Hilo. She has been teaching ESL for more than 20 years in Micronesia and the mainland United States.

Listening to the News Headlines

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Become fluent listeners of the news by repeated listening to international news headlines

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
2–3 minutes

Resources
A good quality recording of the international news (e.g., BBC World News)—headlines only

Procedure

1. Record the BBC World News headlines (usually three–five items), making sure that you can spell the names mentioned.
2. Play the headlines to the class once straight through, then headline by headline.
3. On the second playing, pause after each headline and ask the class to work together to build up each news headline on the board. Either you or a student can write what the class suggests. Different students will have heard different things.
4. Once all headlines have been built up in this way, play the headlines again. Discuss frequently occurring phrases and interesting collocations with your students. The technique needs to be repeated over time to get the benefits of repeated listening and processing of vocabulary items.

Contributor

David Pepperle teaches at the Seafield School of English in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Guess the Meaning

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Focus repeated attention to new vocabulary

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Objects or pictures

The aim of this activity is to get learners to listen to a lot of repetitions of new vocabulary while they are interested and attentive.

Procedure

1. Put 10–12 objects or pictures where all the class can see them.
2. Call a learner to come to the front.
3. Repeatedly say the name of one of the objects while the learner guesses which object has that name by pointing at each object in turn. If the learner points to the wrong object, keep repeating the word. When the learner points to the correct object, say "Yes!" and repeat the name of the object.
4. Say the name of another of the objects, while the learner points. When the learner eventually points to the correct item, quickly revise the previous items by saying their name and getting the learner to point.
5. Continue until all the objects have been named.

Caveats and Options

Instead of objects or pictures, L1 translations can be written on the blackboard for the learner to point to.

Contributor

Paul Nation teaches at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. H. V. George introduced him to this idea.

Matching Exercises

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Learn new words quickly
Use resources

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Words and definitions

When working from a textbook, it is necessary to understand the new words that appear in each unit. Otherwise, the exercises become little more than meaningless repetition of patterns. The density of new vocabulary often makes it impractical to deal with new words as they arise—to do so would disrupt the flow of the lesson. The following activity enables learners to approach text exercises with greater confidence and virtually eliminates the "dictionary panic" that can make text lessons such an ordeal.

Procedure

1. Divide the learners into groups.
2. Give them a list of words from the textbook and a list of definitions that need to be matched.
3. The learners use group discussion, dictionaries, and the textbook to match the words and the definitions. In the process, they encounter many additional L2 words and form associations that may help them to remember the meaning; moreover, once they have worked out the meaning through the L2, they usually add a corresponding L1 equivalent that serves as further reinforcement. Thus, the benefits of both methods—L1 definitions and L2 translations—are captured in a single exercise that can be easily finished in one class period.

Caveats and Options

An amusing variation on the above that is useful for review is an activity I call the *omikuji* vocabulary game. The same definitions that appeared in the above activity are printed on small slips of paper resembling the *omikuji*, or fortunes, that are sold at shrines and temples in Japan. The teacher becomes a vendor of "fortunes," and learners take turns "buying" *omikuji*. As the fortunes (definitions) are read, learners try to guess the word before anyone else can.

Contributor

Richard Dean teaches in Japan.

Words and the World

Levels
Advanced

Aims
Develop awareness of etymology

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
A wall-size world map
A list of words that have traveled around the world
A copy (enlarged for easier reading) of the entry for each word from a dictionary with detailed etymologies
A copy of the dictionary's list of country abbreviations

This technique lets students learn new vocabulary or review old vocabulary while learning names of countries and languages by looking at the word's etymology. Students will also get experience reading dictionary entries and using maps.

Procedure

1. Organize the class into small groups of students and let each group choose a word.
2. Give them a few minutes to study their entries, consulting the wall map if necessary.
3. A representative from each group then explains to the class their word's etymology using the map.

Caveats and Options

1. Students can place stars or tacks on their countries. The emerging pattern after several words would instruct the class about English's global development.
2. To make this activity easier the teacher can (a) rewrite the dictionary entries or (b) let the students write their findings on a prepared worksheet.
3. To make this activity more challenging the teacher can (a) provide entries from several dictionaries or (b) let the students make their report into a short speech using specific target structures (e.g., "Rice was grown in China, then it was brought to Japan. . .").

Contributor

Van Le is a language instructor at the Japan Intercultural Academy of Municipalities. She is also Editor of Hands on Team Teaching *(Hokkaido AJET), a collection of simple activities in Japanese. Her interests include intercultural education, English as an International Language and Computer Assisted Instruction.*

♦ Receptive Use: Individualized Work
One More Sentence

Levels
Any

Aims
Individualize the learning of new vocabulary

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
25 minutes

Resources
Prepared activity

Procedure

1. Prepare an activity dealing with 10 words, similar to the following example (the example deals with 5 words). Several similar exercises are kept together in a "vocabulary box," so that learners can work on them in their own time and at their own speed.
   - A *restaurant* is a building. A person sells food in a restaurant. People can buy many kinds of food and drink there.
   - A *bee* can fly. A bee is yellow and black. A bee makes honey.
   - *Petrol* burns very easily. People use petrol in cars, trucks, and buses. Without petrol a car cannot move.
   - A *tent* is made of cloth. People sometimes carry a tent when they walk far from home. A tent is like a small room.
   - A *map* is very useful. A map is a picture of streets, roads, towns and cities. A map also shows us hills, mountains, and rivers.

   Use these sentences to add to the groups above.

   1. Soldiers sometimes live in it.
   2. We use it when we want to know the way.
   3. It can hurt people.
   4. People go there to eat.
   5. We buy it at a garage.

2. The learners choose a sheet, read each set of sentences and choose the sentence to complete each set. They write the word and the number of the missing sentence, for example, *tent* 1.
3. The learners mark their answers themselves with an answer key.

Caveats and Options

Arrange the sentences in each group so that the first sentences do not contain a lot of information. This makes it necessary for the learners to read all the sentences in a group.

Contributor

Paul Nation teaches at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Enrichment Packets

Levels
Any

Aims
Quickly expand vocabulary learning

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
30–40 minutes

Resources
Sears and Roebuck catalogue (or similar commercial product)

Each learner's foreign vocabulary is different from all others'. This is only one of several reasons that make it difficult to address the teaching of vocabulary during class time. Any immigrant or visitor faces the daunting task of learning a massive amount of vocabulary for the purposes of daily living, the largest class of words being nouns. There are various classes of nouns that concern each aspect of our lives. What better source is there for these nouns, and their attendant window on the culture, than a major mail order catalogue? For the purposes of enriching my students' knowledge of U.S. culture and enlarging their lexicons, I have used a Sears and Roebuck catalogue.

Procedure

1. Cut up the catalogue into hundreds of pieces, arranging the pictures into topic sets and placing them in clear plastic sandwich bags. On the back of each mounted picture, write the English word for the object in question. Along with the set of mounted pictures, place a set of cards with the English words on them. These packets (there are dozens) are neatly packaged lessons on a wide variety of subjects, activities, all aspects of our lives. Everything from fashions, sports, household matters, leisure activities, and baby care, to music, travel, and jewelry are covered.
2. Encourage the students to make use of these packets when they have completed their in-class work. They may work alone or in pairs.
3. The development of collocation relationships can easily be integrated into the use of these packets by having the students, in groups, create adjectival phrases, verb phrases and the like. In fact, four or five sentences could be written on the back of each mounted picture card illustrating typical sentence patterns and collocations. In a similar

vein, the actual caption or legend could be pasted on the back. Further work may be done with the packets by asking students to physically arrange the items into some sort of semantic web, or form of hyponymy.

There are a number of advantages to this activity: Vocabulary study and learning can be individualized, class time is maximized, packets cover a wide range of human interest and endeavor, visual as well as verbal input maximizes retention, and concepts of both syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships can be introduced and reinforced.

Contributor

Mark James is Director of the TESOL program at Brigham Young University, Hawaii, in the United States. He is also Editor of the TESL Reporter.

Peer Teaching

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Encourage native speakers to help nonnative speakers with their vocabulary

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
A sheet of pictures
A sheet of names for the pictures

Contributor

Procedure

1. Give the native speakers a sheet containing 20 words that need to be taught to the nonnative speaker. Give the nonnative speaker a sheet of 20 pictures that match the words but which are not in the same order as the native speaker's list of words.
2. Get the learners to sit in pairs facing each other so they cannot see each other's words or pictures.
3. Tell the native speaker to say a word from the sheet and explain the meaning to the nonnative speaker. The nonnative speaker has to try to understand the explanation and find the matching picture. When it is found, the native speaker spells the word for the native speaker to write next to the picture. The nonnative speaker tells the native speaker the number of the picture.
4. Ask the native speaker to continue describing all the words until every picture and word has been matched.
5. Put the two sheets together to see if the matching is correct.

Paul Nation is the author of Teaching and Learning Vocabulary *(Heinle & Heinle, 1990).*

Words in Code

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Develop close attention to the form of words

Class Time
20 minutes

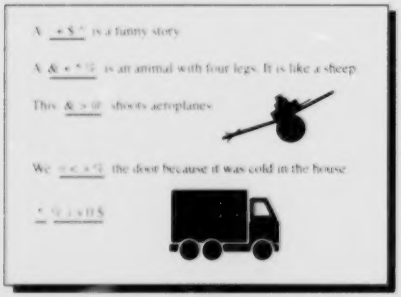
Preparation Time
50 minutes

Resources
Code activity sheets

Because learners have varied vocabularies, it is useful to have activities that they can do individually.

Procedure

1. Prepare sheets like the example. It is possible to fit about 50 items on a sheet.



2. The learners work on the sheets in their own time. They do not need to be marked.

Caveats and Options

1. The words in code on the sheet are chosen so that they are all made up of no more than 12–15 different letters of the alphabet.
2. Some of the words on the sheet that are already known to the learners must use all of these letters so that the learners can successfully decode the unknown words.

Contributor

Paul Nation has taught at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, for more than 25 years.

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Individualized Picture Matching

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Learn new words through context and pictures

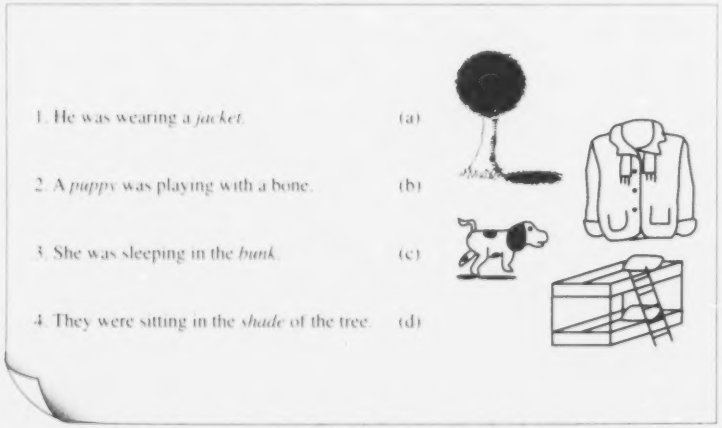
Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
50 minutes

Resources
Activity sheet

Procedure

1. Prepare a sheet containing about 20 small pictures and 20 sentences. The sentences should consist of the word to be learned in a simple context that will allow the learners to match it with the appropriate picture. Highlight the word in the sentence to be matched with the picture. Here is part of a sheet.


1. He was wearing a *jacket*. (a)
2. A *puppy* was playing with a bone. (b)
3. She was sleeping in the *bunk*. (c)
4. They were sitting in the *shade* of the tree. (d)

2. Have each learner work individually to match the sentences with the pictures. When they are finished, they mark their work from an answer sheet.

Contributor

Paul Nation is the author of Teaching and Learning Vocabulary *(Heinle & Heinle, 1990).*

♦ Productive Use
State It, Say It, and Erase It

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop observation skills to help learning

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Words in a closed set

This teaching technique is especially effective for the learning of closed set vocabulary such as the months of the year, the days of the week, the four seasons, the four cardinal directions, cardinal and ordinal numbers up to one hundred, and the like. It also works well with synonyms, antonyms, and hyponyms when they are introduced as a closed set.

Procedure

1. Practice the pronunciation of the words in natural sequence, then at random.
2. When the learners are sufficiently familiar with the words, say, after about 3 minutes, start erasing the words one by one in the middle of the choral practice, sequentially or at random, until all the words have been erased.
3. Invite the whole class to practice saying the words for the last time, as if they were still visible on the board. Students will be surprised to discover that they can remember the words without much difficulty.
4. Present the words a few days later in exactly the same positions on the board, asking the students to provide as many of the set as they can remember.

Caveats and Options

While writing the words on the board, take care to put them in a particular order or sequence. For example, the months of the year should be in four columns, roughly correlating with the four seasons. This is important because the relative position of individual words on the board provides an extra visual stimulus for learners to retrieve the words in question.

Contributor

David Li Chor-shing teaches in the English Department of the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Occupations

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Practice job names within a humanistic context
Improve listening comprehension skills of vocabulary items

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Pictures/drawings of about 10 different occupations and a chart as described below

Procedure

1. Introduce and practice names of different occupations.
2. Introduce a sentence pattern to practice this vocabulary, such as *When I was a child, I wanted to be a pianist* or *If I graduate from college, I would like to be a lawyer.*
3. Make a grid with occupations lined up horizontally on top and names of the teachers/students lined up vertically on the left.
4. Make sentences or question-and-answer dialogues about the teachers/students themselves and their occupations.

	Baseball player	Florist	Doctor	Pilot	Farmer
Mr. Tanaka					
Mrs. Ortiz					
Mr. Van Els					
Ms. Freich					
Miss Kobayashi					

Examples:

Teacher: When Mr. Tanaka was a child, he wanted to be a baseball player.
(The student marks a circle in the corresponding grid box).

or

Teacher: When Miss Kobayashi was a child, did she want to be a florist?
Student: No, she didn't.
(The student marks a cross (x) in the corresponding grid box.)

5. Thus, students listen and mark with a tick or cross in the relevant box.

Contributor

Elizabeth Lange currently teaches at Temple University Japan. She has also taught ESL and EFL in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea.

Let's Go Shopping

Levels
Beginning–low intermediate

Aims
Become familiar with numbers in prices
Improve vocabulary for shopping
Practice verbal skills in a real-life setting

Class Time
40 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Local daily newspapers with sales advertisements (in color)
Coupon books
Advertisements

Procedures

1. Cut out pictures with prices of food items, clothes, and other items for sale.
2. Organize pictures into different folders.
3. Distribute the pictures to the students.
4. Point to, read and pronounce a few unfamiliar items at the beginning of class from one advertisement, for example, *zucchini, eggplant, Lean Cuisine, bike shorts, discount coupons.*
5. Ask students to write the new vocabulary in their books and then read, pronounce, and study the new vocabulary and numbers.
6. Have the students work in pairs or groups. One group or person asks "What is this?" "How much is this?" Others answer.
7. Suggest that students go on shopping trips in the classroom. Divide the class into shoppers, cashier, sales person and store manager. Have imaginary products and get students to use their pictures of products and their coupons.
8. Give a dictation on numbers and essential shopping vocabulary.

Caveats and Options

1. Add further pictures for specialty shops.
2. Have a sale day.
3. Discuss cost comparisons of products in the United States and the students' home countries.

Contributors

Devi Spencer teaches in the Language and Culture Center of the University of Houston. She has taught ESL/EFL in the United States, Canada, and Japan during the past 10 years.

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Vocabulary Keys for Interaction

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Practice using conversational vocabulary items

Class Time
25–40 minutes

Preparation Time
Homework assignment plus 10 minutes by students in class

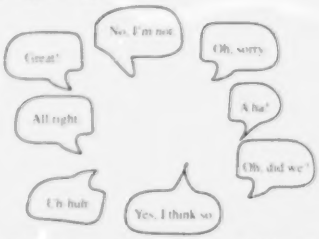
Resources
None

When students of ESL/EFL communicate in English, they often do not know how to respond verbally to show surprise, dismay, consent, disagreement, or other emotions; instead, they often remain silent, which may lead to communication breakdown. Such backchanneling, however, is vital in English. The following is a way in which to get students to focus on the backchanneling vocabulary that facilitates communication.

Procedure

1. Provide examples of when the following kinds of responses are used.

   Oh, yes.
   Oh, yeah?
   Oh, were/have/are we?
   Yes, I am/do; he/she/it is/does; we/they are/do.
   No, I don't; he/she/it isn't/doesn't; we/they aren't/don't.
   Sounds (It/That sounds)/They sound good/great!
   It/That/They sound(s) nice.
   Oh, it/that's/they're great!
   Oh, really?
   I see.
   Sure.
   Oh, why?
   Oh, that's nice.
   Gee, I have no idea.



2. Give each student a different response to work on and ask him/her to prepare three situations and associated dialogues by listening to the radio, watching TV, or asking other native speakers. One may be from a conversation textbook.

43

3. Have each student choose one dialogue and in pairs they practice the dialogues so they can then present them to the whole class. (Each pair presents two short dialogues to the class.)
4. After the demonstrations, tell the students to hand in a written version of the situations they have prepared including the one they have demonstrated. Jumble them up and give a different one to each student. Let each student say the first part of the dialogue and with the other students giving a proper response.
5. Finally, orally test the students with some of the other dialogues submitted by the students by citing the first part and waiting for their response.

Contributors

Elizabeth Lange currently teaches at Temple University Japan. She has also taught ESL/EFL in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea.

Jong-Oe Park teaches English in Japan. He has also taught English in South Korea at the secondary and tertiary levels.

Co-occurrences in English

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Learn lexicalized collocations

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Cards with one word of a co-occurrence on each

English contains a number of expressions that are made up of two or three words that often occur together in a fixed order. These expressions, or co-occurrences, are joined together with the connectives *and* or *or*. Learning co-occurrences involves the learning of semantically related words as well as the learning of conventional word order.

This activity can be carried out by students working in groups or pairs. To make it more competitive and challenging, it helps to set a limit on the amount of time the class has to complete the task. The amount of time may vary depending on the level of the class.

Procedure

1. Compile a list of the co-occurrences you wish to teach. (An extensive list follows.)
2. Write the words from each co-occurrence on a card or piece of paper (omitting the connective).
3. Give each group or pair of students a set of cards, tell them the connective to use, and set the clock.
4. Students must work together in groups or with a partner to match words correctly using the connective given. Additional attention must be paid to word order.
5. Give groups or pairs points for (a) the order in which they complete the task (e.g., most points being given to those who finish first) and (b) completing the task in the time allowed.
6. Subtract points for any errors made and declare a final winner.

Caveats and Options

1. This activity can be carried out in rounds by first assembling co-occurrences joined by *and*, then those joined by *or*, and finally those made up of three items.

2. This activity encourages students to associate semantically similar vocabulary items and develop their awareness of word order. Teachers should be aware that some co-occurrences in English do not exist in or vary in word order from those in the students' L1, and special help with these expressions may be needed.
3. Many co-occurrences sound trite when used inappropriately or too often. Care must be taken when selecting expressions for this activity and some explanation may be required to caution students on how to use them.

Appendix: Sample List of Co-occurrences

1. Mom and Dad
2. brothers and sisters
3. sons and daughters
4. nephews and nieces
5. husband and wife
6. bride and groom
7. aunts and uncles
8. mother and father
9. prince and princess
10. ladies and gentlemen
11. boys and girls
12. shoes and socks
13. hat and coat
14. tables and chairs
15. lock and key
16. needle and thread
17. pins and needles
18. tooth and nail
19. arms and legs
20. aches and pains
21. heel and toe
22. heart and soul
23. stop and go
24. buy and sell
25. hit and run
26. forgive and forget
27. ask and answer
28. top and bottom
29. left and right
30. up and down
31. in and out
32. straight and narrow
33. far and wide
34. off and on
35. before and after
36. thunder and lightning
37. bows and arrows
38. supply and demand
39. pros and cons
40. do's and don'ts
41. black and white/blue
42. thick and thin
43. pure and simple
44. safe and sound
45. flora and fauna
46. cards and letters
47. cats and dogs
48. this or that

Contributor

Kathleen S. Foley received her MA in Applied Linguistics from Indiana University. She has taught in the United States and the People's Republic of China. She currently teaches at Aoyama Gakuin Women's Junior College in Tokyo, Japan.

A to Z Vocabulary

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Take responsibility for own learning

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Many problems present themselves when teaching vocabulary. Do we teach straight from vocabulary lists, having the students memorize the lists and, then, test that memorization? This seems to be a common teaching method, although it is far from clear as to whether this is an effective way to teach vocabulary. The new words are soon lost because the students have not learned them in a real environment. Vocabulary needs to be taught from "natural" environments and exposure must occur in various ways (such as speaking and writing), before the student will be able to retain the words. The following exercise illustrates this point.

Procedure

1. Once a week (or more often, if desired), assign each student a letter from the alphabet. Start with *A* and work your way through. In smaller classes this will mean that the entire alphabet will not be covered that week. This is perfectly acceptable, as this exercise can be used throughout the semester.
2. Tell the students to find two words which begin with their assigned letter. These words must be in a natural environment (books, newspapers, etc.). Emphasize that the students should look for words that relate to their field of study. For example, if a student in the biological sciences were given the letter *A*, they might find the words ***agriculture*** and ***arboretum***. The engineering student who has *B* might find ***brick*** and ***building***.
3. They must then copy the sentences in which the words occur and write two original sentences, using the words in their correct context.
4. When the students return to class, divide them into heterogeneous groups of four, where they exchange words and definitions. Each

student's goal is to use at least four of the words from their group in a paragraph.

Caveats and Options

1. Give some type of prize for the student who is able to use all eight words in their proper context in the paragraph.
2. Move into a peer-editing session, during which each member in the group is given the opportunity to comment on the other members' writing.
3. Having the students choose their own words, and by ensuring that the words relate to their field, accomplishes a number of tasks related to improving retention. First, the students have chosen words that directly relate to their future learning. Second, the students have used the words communicatively in group discussion and in writing. Finally, the students have been given the opportunity to guide their learning. Because retention is the most important variable in vocabulary building, it becomes imperative that the words the students are to learn have relevance and importance for them. The students learn vocabulary they have chosen to learn.

Contributor

Thomas Nixon teaches in the American English Institute at California State University, Fresno, in the United States, and is a candidate for the MA in Linguistics (ESL Option).

Ghost Story

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Learn the vocabulary needed to tell a ghost story

Class Time
15 minutes per person

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
None

Caveats and Options

Procedure

1. Give the students 1 week to prepare a ghost story to tell the class. Although this will typically be a traditional tale, some students may share personal experiences of the paranormal.
2. Divide the class into groups that contain students from different cultural backgrounds.
3. Students tell their stories to their groups. Generally, a story requires 10–15 minutes as students are frequently interrupted by questions from other group members. If the class is divided into groups of four, the activity lasts about an hour.
4. The teacher monitors group work, supplying vocabulary as needed and writing new words on the blackboard. In low intermediate classes, it may be necessary for the teacher to restate parts of some students' stories for a group.

1. Use the vocabulary written on the blackboard during the activity as material for future lessons.
2. Lead a class discussion examining ghost stories from different countries for common elements.
3. Tell a traditional ghost story to the class.
4. Supply the students with the text of a short ghost story. The students read silently as the teacher reads the story aloud.
5. This activity presents new vocabulary in a striking context. In addition to searching for new vocabulary while preparing a story, students are exposed to more new vocabulary when each of their peers relates a story. The teacher supplies vocabulary as needed during the activity. For example, while explaining the difference between a Chinese

vampire and the American version, one student demonstrated the Chinese vampire's form of travel (hopping) which led to discussion of a series of words describing movement. Students work in groups of three to six in order to eliminate the fear of speaking to a large audience.

Contributor

Michele Kilgore is an ESL instructor at Georgia State University in the United States. She has an MS in Applied Linguistics and is working on her doctorate.

Stars and Signs

Levels
Advanced

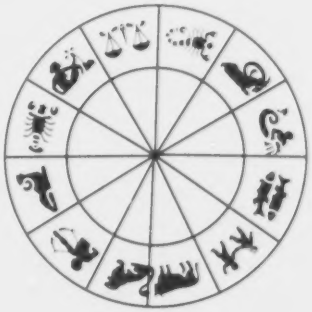
Aims
Consolidate and expand abstract adjectives in a vivid and meaningful context

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
List of horoscope signs
Overhead projector (OHP)

Stars and Signs will generate a set of synonyms and act as a class-created thesaurus. The teacher's comments on the student-produced lexis after each group's mimes will help students towards an understanding of different shades of meaning among synonym clusters. There is a game element in the search for the correct word that motivates the students to activate and search their own vocabulary resources. Informed guessing as a strategy is built into the game.



Procedure

1. Ask the students to get into groups according to either their astrological sign, for example, Aries, Taurus, Libra, or to their Chinese Horoscope sign, for example, Ox, Monkey, Dragon. Information about which months correspond with which astrological sign and which years correspond with which Chinese signs, should be made available to students who are unclear about which group they belong to.

2. Ask the groups to discuss the salient characteristics of the sign they were born under, and to come up with two positive and two negative attributes of that sign. For example, Libras are said to be fair and peace loving, lazy, and indecisive. The Ox, on the other hand, is industrious and determined, stubborn and slow. The students then have to think of mimed improvisations that will illustrate these characteristics.
3. Have the groups perform their mimes as the other groups watch and call out the adjectives they think the miming group is trying to convey. A group stops miming when the correct adjective has been guessed and the next one assumes the stage.
4. Have each group participate until all the groups have mimed the attributes of their sign.
5. Write down all the adjectives called out by the observing students on an OHP. And at the end of each miming session, review all the vocabulary. This vocabulary will normally consist of a set of synonyms clustered around the original core concept of the students' chosen attribute; for example, for the Ox, the words called out for one of the mimed attributes may have been, *hard-working, busy, energetic, energetic, industrious*.

Contributor

Dino Mahoney is Senior Lecturer in the English Department of the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. He teaches on BA and MA TESL programs including the teaching of modules on drama in ESL. He has also lived and taught in England, Greece, and the United Arab Emirates.

Whattya Hear?

Levels
Advanced

Aims
Extend vocabulary in context

Class Time
20–25 minutes

Preparation Time
10–15 minutes

Resources
Audiotape of sounds

The following activity combines listening, speaking, and writing skills in contextualized, interactive, purposeful, and interesting ways that enable students to learn new vocabulary items. This task is meaningful, involves semantic processing, and provides a basis for organization and retention in the student's memory. It can be extended to many other sounds and situations.

Procedure

1. Play an audiotape of the following sounds: applause, whispering, sneezing, whistling, screaming, coughing, laughing, yawning, sighing, kissing, and chewing. The students will recognize these everyday sounds and will be given the vocabulary (in this case, verbs) in English.
2. Use each word in a sentence to give it a meaningful context. Amusing visuals can be made up by the teacher to be used in this introductory segment of the exercise. These should vary according to the age of the students.
3. Ask the students to think of other sentences in which the new words can be used. Correct pronunciation should be emphasized as the words are introduced if the new items are to be used effectively and understood without difficulty by native speakers.
4. Ask the class to write a short story incorporating as many of the new words as possible. This can be done as a class exercise, with the teacher or a volunteer student writing on the board. This exercise allows the teacher to verify if students have understood the new words and can use them in appropriate contexts. (See sample text in Appendix.)

Caveats and Options

1. As a follow-up or homework exercise, ask the students to make up a different version of the story incorporating the new words.
2. Ask the students to use the new words in different tenses as they are all verbs. Through manipulation and use of the new forms, they will be made aware of the many contexts in which these words can be used and can more readily fix them in memory.

Appendix: Sample Text

Randy is whistling because he is happy. He is watching a comedy show on TV. He laughs and applauds each time he hears a good joke. His little sister appears and Randy notices that she is coughing and sneezing. When she sees that her mother is not in the room, she starts to cry and then scream. Randy tries to get her to stop. He gives her some medicine. He kisses her and whispers comforting words, but she continues. He sighs deeply. He is very happy when she stops and begins to yawn. He puts her to sleep in her room and returns to the kitchen as he is hungry. He prepares an enormous sandwich for himself and begins to chew noisily. He then returns to watching TV.

Contributor

Celia Davidson-Maxwell is at the University of Florida in the United States.

♦ Words in Texts
Read and Retell

Levels
Any

Aims
Meet new vocabulary through supportive, interactive reading
Increase control over vocabulary through repeated use in speaking
Speak with greater fluency

Class Time
30–50 minutes

Preparation Time
30 minutes or less if texts are available

Resources
Two short stories or newspaper articles with narrative structure (250–500 words)

This is an active and enjoyable task in which use of new vocabulary is integrated with reading, speaking, listening, and cooperative group work. The steps in the activity provide learners with the resources and the practice to extend their productive vocabulary use and to speak more fluently and for longer than they would otherwise be able to.

Procedure

1. Give one half of the class copies of one story and give the other half the second story.
2. Tell the learners with the same story to read their story in groups of three or four so they can help each other with comprehension problems.
3. Ask the learners to practice telling the story to each other in the first person, referring to the text to help them with details. Each group member should have a turn at adding a further step in the narrative.
4. Tell each learner to pair up with someone from the other half of the class. They should tell their stories to each other (in the first person) with a 4-minute time limit. (They may also change partners and tell the story again, this time with a 3-minute time limit.)
5. Ask the groups to reassemble and reconstruct the story they listened to. One group member takes notes covering the main points of Who? When? Where? and What?
6. Arrange for each group from one half to get together with a group from the other. While the groups listen as their reconstituted story is read aloud, they should make comments and corrections.

Caveats and Options

1. The key to the success of this activity is well-chosen stories. I have collected a number of timeless rescue stories from the newspaper. Short articles that are not narrative based can also be used. For example, I have successfully used articles on subjects such as telepathy, and color and feeling from *Beyond Words* (Maley & Duff, 1976, Cambridge University Press).
2. If a language laboratory is available, the learners can retell their stories onto tapes. With this option, they may want time to make brief speaking notes in Step 3. In the following steps, they listen to other learners' tapes and then regroup to compare notes.
3. Surprisingly different versions of the original stories can emerge, as well as versions that highlight certain details and not others. For these reasons the reconstituting and comparison of stories can be very amusing and involve a lot of interactive language work.

Contributor

Jonathan Newton has taught in China and at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand, where he has been for the past 6 years. He recently completed his PhD.

Idioms in Popular Music

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Learn idioms in real use
Practice guessing from context
Get strongly focused listening practice

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
30 minutes

Resources
Cloze version of a popular song

Many kinds of music, both old and new, can be used for this, as long as they meet two requirements: (a) use of English-language idioms and (b) understandable vocals. My criterion for the latter is that if I have to strain to catch the words, it is not suitable for language learners. Some pieces I use are: "Papa Was A Rolling Stone" (The Temptations), "Heard It Through The Grapevine" (Credence Clearwater Revival), "Things That Make You Go Hmmm. . ." (CC Music Factory).

Procedure

1. Make a copy of the lyrics (with idiomatic expressions underlined) and give the students a cloze version. For the first version, delete one or two stressed content words per line, increasing the number slightly as the song progresses. If the lyrics are repetitive, leave blank an entire line on its third or fourth repetition. Consider the proficiency level of the students when choosing the words to omit, and omit fewer words, usually not starting until several lines into the song, for lower-level students. For very low-level students, full lines can simply be scrambled; for those who are advanced, more words and even some phrases can be omitted.
2. Form groups of three or four (from different language backgrounds, if possible) and give each group one copy of cloze lyrics.
3. Let the students simply listen to the song once or twice.
4. Play the song twice again (uninterrupted) while they attempt to fill in the missing words.
5. Play it again, pausing briefly after every few lines.
6. Groups help each other (without the music) fill in the words still missing.

7. Each group tries to determine what words and phrases are used idiomatically and guess at the meanings based on context.
8. The whole class discusses, with groups trying to agree on idiomatic expressions and their meanings. Only if students miss an expression or cannot come close to the meaning do I point out the idiom or define it.

Contributor

Coleman South teaches at the American Language Center in Damascus, Syria. Partial credit for this idea goes to Elena Pavia, a teacher of English who uses popular music to teach U.S. social history and culture in Barcelona, Spain.

The Vocabulary of Newspapers

Levels
Beginning, adults

Aims
Rapidly expand vocabulary

Class Time
40 minutes

Preparation Time
20–30 minutes

Resources
Simplified current news items
Full newspaper items

One of the challenges of teaching English to a class of adult beginners is to make the thinking level higher than at first seems possible for their level of vocabulary. A technique I have used is to introduce the language of current news items via simplified versions of newspaper articles.

Procedure

1. For each lesson, prepare a simplified version of news items from that day's paper and attach it to the full news report. Today's paper, for example, would have yielded the following text about one photograph and news item:

   These men are soldiers.
   They are carrying food.
   The food is rice.
   They are putting sacks of rice on to a ship.
   The food is going to Bangladesh.
   The people in Bangladesh are hungry.

   Sometimes I have added quick sketches beside the sentences, for instance of sacks or a ship.

2. Ask the learners to do some simple tasks based on the item. For example:

   Look at the picture. Find the sacks of rice
   the soldiers
   the ship.

   Look at the map. Where is Bangladesh? Why do the people need food?

Use half the number of picture stories as there are people in the class, to encourage communication. As the papers are being passed round, read, and discussed, move round responding to questions or adding comments.

3. Next, collect all the accounts, hold them up one by one and ask different people to talk about them. List on the board any words that arise or that students are searching for. As many as 50 new words a day can be generated in this way.
4. For the next lesson, blank out the key words and pass around the same pages for students to try themselves out either orally or in writing on the missing words.
5. The pages can then lie around the classroom for students to use as they wish. Some like to copy them out; others like to take them home.

Caveats and Options

1. Choose a range of topics to cover the interests of as many students as possible.
2. Select items with supporting pictures to provide a context.
3. See the resource as a temporary one that takes very little time to prepare.
4. Keep weaving into the simplified versions as many as possible of the words from recent weeks.
5. Let the context (words and pictures) supply the meaning of more difficult words.
6. Encourage students to use the versions in whatever way they find most helpful.
7. The technique attends to a number of principles of learning: systematic building up of new vocabulary, room for individual differences in learning strategies and a communicative approach to the learning of words. It also reflects the international composition of many ESOL classes.

Contributor

Marilyn Lewis is Senior Lecturer in the English Department of the University of Auckland, New Zealand, where she has responsibility for the Diploma in English Language Teaching. She has also taught in India and Cambodia.

Retelling Texts to Learn New Vocabulary

Levels
High beginning +

Aims
Integrate new vocabulary into existing lexicon

Class Time
30–45 minutes

Preparation Time
45–50 minutes

Resources
A short text
Two task cards
Overhead projector (OHP) and transparencies

Retelling texts encourages learners to attend closely to the meaning of the text and to draw on their experiences and prior knowledge of a particular situation and topic when reading. This process helps learners activate vocabulary knowledge and enrich the contexts and meanings of partially known words.

Procedure

1. Check texts for their suitability to this task. Prepare a few prereading questions to activate learners' background knowledge. Prepare brief task sheets explaining the situation and the learners' roles. Prepare brief demonstration texts and tasks.
2. Introduce the topic and prereading questions. Elicit responses and discuss.
3. Divide the students into pairs. Put the instructions for Student A (retellers) on the OHP. Ask a volunteer to tell the class what is required in the task. Emphasize the following points:
   - Use your own words when retelling
   - Make sure you include all the important ideas
   - Use your own experience to describe or explain new information
   - Give examples
   - Use context clues and your own knowledge to work out new words
   - Tell all the Student As to start the task
   - Select one student to be timekeeper
4. Put the instructions for Student B on the OHP. Ask a volunteer to tell the class what is required in the task. Tell Student Bs to start the task.

5. Use two volunteers to demonstrate the retelling and the negotiation of vocabulary meaning. Focus students' attention on the use of paraphrase, examples, associated words/contexts/concepts, and personal elaboration.
6. Ask students to practice the demonstration task in pairs. Monitor the activity.
7. Distribute new texts and task sheets to one member of the pair. Distribute new task sheets to the other member. Tell students to time the reading (10 minutes) and to start the activity.

Caveats and Options

1. Write instructions that encourage learners to process information in the text from a different point of view from that presented by the writer. Also, change the genre: If the text reports on treatments for pain control, instruct the student to talk about treatments s/he has tried. When writing tables, charts and so on for Student B, word the information in such a way that none of the target words is used verbatim. Substitute with synonyms, paraphrase, superordinates, and so forth.
2. To follow up the task, students can work in pairs to organize vocabulary into categories. Group according to meaning, physical properties, part of speech, associations, superordinate/subordinate groups, and so on. Use the target words plus words from the text and background knowledge. Compare the categories and discuss.

Contributor

Angela Joe has taught English to Japanese students in Japan and in New Zealand for 4 years. She is currently studying for an MA in Applied Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Vocabulary in News Broadcasts

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Expand and practice vocabulary

Class Time
20–30 minutes

Preparation Time
30–45 minutes

Resources
Audio- or videotaped news items

This activity requires either an audio- or videotape of a local or national news show. (National news shows may be better because they highlight events around the world; it may, then, be easier to find topics interesting to foreign students.) News, in contrast to other kinds of programming such as talk shows or situation comedies, contains less slang, fewer colloquial expressions, fewer sentence fragments, and less emotionally charged language. When these factors exist in combination, they can distract from the topic, overwhelm the listener, and make the in-class activity a bigger chore than it needs to be.

Procedure

1. Tape a news show and choose a segment that is appropriate for the particular students.
2. Play the segment in class. Some segments may require two or three playbacks, depending on the level of the students and the complexity of the language.
3. Lead a discussion examining the importance of the topic in the home country/city/state and eliciting cross-cultural information from the students.
4. Have the class examine the difficult vocabulary used in the segment. This list can be prepared ahead of time or the students can point out problem words on their own.
5. Students can act out the role of newscaster, giving their own version of the news using one or more of the vocabulary items.

Caveats and Options

1. The role-play activity is a good follow-up to each lesson, or can be scheduled less often at the discretion of the instructor.

2. Instructors may wish to use this activity in combination with a vocabulary text, if the news shows are not providing enough new words.
3. Teachers may invest more planning time in this activity, but it allows them greater flexibility in adjusting material to the interests of the students. The tapes themselves can provide sentence frameworks within which problem vocabulary can be practiced for both meaning and for pronunciation and can be analyzed in terms of its grammatical function.
4. This technique allows the class to create its own activities as well. For example, students may prepare their own text or may organize an entire news show with weather, sports, entertainment and so on as an end-of-term project (a project that can be videotaped and reviewed for considerable benefit to the students).
5. Instructors may need to check with the broadcast company to see if there are copyright restrictions.

Contributor

Rebecca Setliff is Director of the Language and Culture Institute and Program Manager for the Center for Executive Education at the University of Pittsburgh in the United States.

Find the Technical Words

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Increase knowledge of subject-related words

Class Time
20–30 minutes

Preparation Time
5–10 minutes

Resources
Newspaper or magazine article on a technical subject

Procedure

1. Choose a technical article such as a sales advertisement, technology update, or sports review.
2. Distribute the article and tell the learners to read it by skimming for content.
3. Tell the learners to list the words or phrases that they believe are technical, or specialized, vocabulary related to the subject matter.
4. Have the learners, in pairs or alone, put as many as possible of the words or phrases into sentences. Set a time limit (maximum 10 minutes).
5. Ask the learners to read their sentences aloud. Tell them whether the sentences are correct or not.
6. Encourage the learners to seek further clarification as needed.

Caveats and Options

Ask learners with expertise in the topic at hand to explain the terms as necessary.

Contributor

Maria Verivaki studied at Victoria University of Wellington and now teaches English in Greece.

Part II: Establishing Vocabulary

Editor's Note

In this section and the following, a distinction is made between activities that establish the meaning of previously met vocabulary and activities that enrich the meaning of previously met vocabulary.

Establishing and enriching activities are each important for vocabulary learning. *Establishing activities* encourage repetition of what was previously learned. In the activities in this section, repetition is achieved as the learners

- perform an action
- draw the term
- choose synonyms
- define terms
- produce the written form of a word
- make a sentence containing the word.

This last kind of activity takes establishing activities close to *enriching activities*. The reason for placing some of the sentence production activities in the establishing section is that learners could recall previously met sentences to perform the activity.

Baddeley (1990) considers that the most useful research finding on repetition and learning is that spaced recall with increasing gaps between the repetitions (expanding rehearsal) is far superior to massed repetition. This means that after a word has been met for the first time, it should be recalled fairly soon after (within a few minutes), then a little later (an hour or two after), then a few days later, then a month later. This kind of schedule fits easily into classroom activity requiring the teacher or the learners to have a system for keeping a rough check of when to recycle material or arrange for repetitions. Baddeley (1990) points out that recalling the item has a stronger effect on learning than having the item presented again, "it appears that the retrieval route to that item is in some way strengthened by being successfully used" (p. 156). Establishing activities

72

can thus lead to improved fluency of access to the repeated items. For vocabulary learning, this means that the learners should not just see the word along with a representation of its meaning but that the learners should see the form and have a chance to recall its meaning, or have a need for the word and have to recall its form.

Repetition can lead to boredom, so it is useful for a teacher to be able to draw on a variety of activities to repeat old material in a new way. These activities can differ only slightly from those met previously by including a challenge, such as a time limit on an activity that previously did not have a time limit. Another challenge is a challenge to memory. An example of an activity with such a challenge is Kim's Game, where the learners have to view items for a short time and then try to recall all that they have seen.

Activities to provide variety in repetition can also be quite different from each other, and this section is a rich source of these. It is quite useful for a teacher to consider planning a simple syllabus to provide for the repetition of a group of words. This planning involves choosing four or five activities suited to these words and then putting the activities in a sequence that best fits the development of the establishment of the words.

References

Baddeley, A. (1990). *Human memory: Theory and practice.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

♦ Revising Words

Calendar Fun

Levels
Beginning; young learners

Aims
Practice the days of the week and numbers

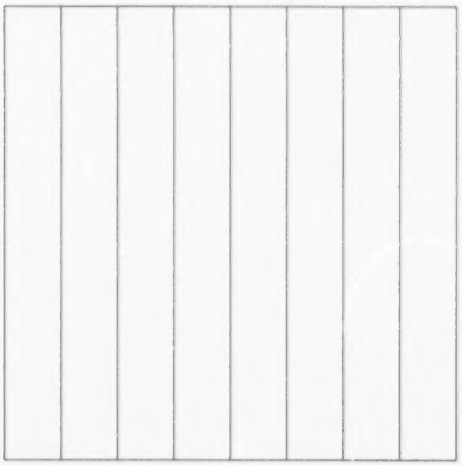
Class Time
40–45 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
One unlined piece of standard size (or larger) typing paper per child
Crayons, scissors, and pencils

Procedure

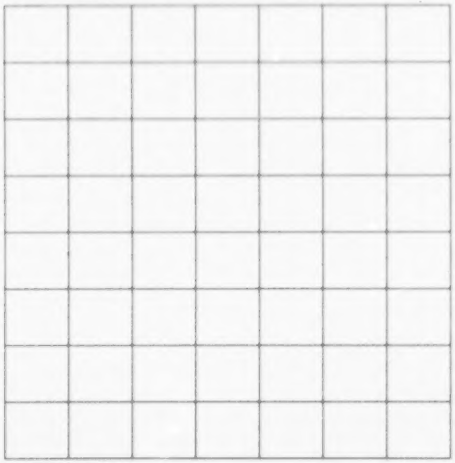
1. Give each child a piece of paper, pencil, scissors, and a few crayons.
2. Give the following directions:
   a. "Fold your paper in half," and model the folding.
   b. "Fold your paper in half again, the same way." The children should now have four folds each going from the top of the paper to the bottom.
   c. "Fold your paper in half again, the same way," and then say, "Unfold your paper. How many parts do you have?" (There should be eight.) "How many days are there in a week?" (Count the days with them, if necessary.)



"If there are 7 days in a week and we have eight spaces for the days' names, what should we do?" (The children should decide to cut off one strip.)

d. Cut off the last strip and have the children do it.

e. "Now fold your paper in half the other way." Continue until the children have 56 boxes.



f. Ask, "What month is this?" The children answer.

g. Say, "Write the name of the month across the top row of boxes on your paper."

h. Say, "What is the first day of the week?" The children answer. Say, "Write 'Sunday' (or 'Sun.') in the first box."

i. Continue until all of the days are written.

j. Say, "What day is it today?" and explain that because today is the first day of the month, and it is a Tuesday or Wednesday and so on, the number 1 does not go in the first box (unless the first of the month happens to fall on a Sunday). Model writing the '1' in the correct box under the correct day.

k. Continue saying and writing the rest of the numbers with the children.

2. After the calendar is finished, you may choose to allow the children to color it and draw a small picture on the holidays. For example, they can draw a pumpkin on October 31.

Caveats and Options

After the calendars are finished, they can be used in many ways:

1. The children can cross off each day as it passes.
2. They can write the weather each day and have a weather calendar. Then they can compare the different seasons at the end of the year.
3. They can pick a favorite "word of the day" each day and write it on the calendar.
4. They can write a noun each day for one month, a verb each day for the next month, and so on.
5. This activity can be done in two days by folding and cutting the first day and writing the second day.

Appendix: Sample Calendar

J	a	n	u	a	r	y
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Contributor

Judi Braverman is a K–5 ESL teacher at Lindell School, Long Beach, New York, in the United States. She has an MA from New York University.

Word Shapes

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Recall words in sets

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Objects to put on an overhead projector (OHP) and a cover

This activity encourages beginning students to consolidate and build on their receptive and productive knowledge of nouns. Speculation about different shapes will generate related vocabulary, for example, different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

Procedure

1. Place, or cover, the OHP so that students cannot see what is on it.
2. Put an assortment of objects on the OHP and then switch it on.
3. The students will see an interesting silhouette collage on the screen. Have them work in pairs to try and identify as many of the objects silhouetted on the screen as they can.

Caveats and Options

1. Make silhouette collages for a particular semantic set, for example, a mixed collage of different kinds of fruits and vegetables: bananas, potatoes, pears, onions, grapes, carrots, mangoes, leeks, apricots, radishes, oranges; objects on a dinner table: knife, fork, spoon, chopsticks, salt and pepper shaker, plate, bowl, toothpicks; objects from a bathroom: toothbrush, toothpaste, scissors, nail file, razor.
2. Make a random silhouette collage of objects collected from students in the class.

Contributor

Dino Mahoney is Senior Lecturer in the English Department of the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. He teaches on BA and MA TESL programs including the teaching of modules on drama in ESL. He has also lived and taught in England, Greece, and the United Arab Emirates.

Repetition Made Enjoyable

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Review known vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
30 minutes initially

Resources
Set of paired picture cards

This activity is based on the premise that learning the correct meaning of a word must be followed by sufficient frequency of use. Initial learning should be carried out in the most efficient way possible, and the subsequent practice should be achieved in the most meaningful and diverting of ways. This variation on the game called "Nature Memory" is one way of achieving this goal.

Procedure

1. The game begins with any number of pairs of picture cards about 2 inches square placed face down. Normally, a player turns one card over and then turns over another, hoping it will make up the pair. If it does, the player collects the pair and continues to try and find other pairs. If it does not, the player carefully turns the cards back face down, as near as possible to their original position because an essential part of the game is remembering the configurations of the cards.
2. Because this is a language learning activity, when a student turns over a card, the player must say what the object is, as in, for example, "It's a car."
3. If able to do so, the player turns over another card. If not, the card is turned back down to its original position, and the turn passes to the next student.
4. Continue the game until all the pairs have been picked up, the player with the most pairs being the winner.

Caveats and Options

1. The game is best played in groups of four to six students with the teacher passing from group to group acting as referee to settle problems of pronunciation and correctness of form.

2. The game may be rendered a little more demanding by having the student who had the previous turn ask a question when the first card is turned over. The questions may be as simple as "What color is it?" or more difficult as in "How many wheels has it got?" If the other student is unable to answer the question, the turn passes to the next student. This addition to the game may well require some preparation in terms of the possible questions to be asked.
3. The pictures may clearly cover a wide range of objects, fauna, and flora, thereby allowing the game to be used at all levels.
4. With more advanced students using more difficult cards, one can imagine all sorts of demanding words and questions that might be used. One can also have, for example, pictures of famous people and, in addition to asking the question "Who is this person?" one can ask other questions about the person.
5. The game may be played as a one-off activity. However, ideally, the sets of cards could be designed to accommodate the vocabulary syllabus. Thus as new words are learned, new cards may be added; as words become so well known that they no longer present a challenge, the appropriate cards may be removed. Long-term retention can be facilitated by using the game systematically, say on a weekly basis.
6. The groups may be selected at random or one can increase the competitive element by using the results of each game to decide the composition of the groups, thereby allowing players of comparable ability to be grouped together. However, players may be at any time demoted or promoted depending on the result of the previous game.
7. I have used this activity for some time now with a wide range of students. It has the great advantage of masking what might be boring repetition in the form of an enjoyable game. Furthermore, it engages the students' attention in their desire to do well while at the same time obliging them to expend some energy on remembering the words they must use. I have been amazed at times how playing with up to 50 pairs in the game, students remember the words with apparent ease.

Contributor

Ronald Sheen teaches in the Faculty of Education of Tottori University, Japan.

Secret Word

Levels
Beginning; adults

Aims
Understand relationships between words and meanings

Class Time
15–20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Small pieces of paper with the same word occurring on two separate pieces clipped together

Caveats and Options

This game is a great deal of fun and can be used with any set of vocabulary. The idea is based on "Password," a popular U.S. TV game show.

Procedure

1. Divide the students into pairs. In a large class, have two pairs play against each other. (Suggestions for doing this in a small group follow.)
2. Give one student in each pair one of the pieces of paper. This person is the clue giver. The partner is the guesser. Thus, in each pair, one student has access to the word and one does not.
3. The two pairs (Students A, B, C, D) sit in a small group. Student A begins by giving a one-word clue to help B (the partner) say the word. After A says a clue, B has 5 seconds to guess. If B is unsuccessful, then C will give a one-word clue to D. D has 5 seconds to guess. Continue until either B or D guesses the word. (Example: With the second word *breakfast*, clues could be *eggs*, *meal*, *morning*.)
4. If this activity is scored, one suggestion is to give 10 points if the word is guessed after the first clue, 9 points after the second, and so on. In other words, as more clues accumulate and it becomes easier to guess the secret word, the number of points decreases. In the next round, students B and D will be clue givers, A and C will be guessers.

1. In a small class, have two students take turns giving clues while all the other students have to take turns guessing. This alternative is useful if you have an odd number of students.
2. It is important that students be limited to one-word clues. It should go without saying that no language but English should be used in this activity.

Contributor

Keith S. Folse is Principal at Language Academy, in Maebashi, Japan. He is the author of English Structure Practices, Intermediate Reading Practices, *and* Talk a Lot *(University of Michigan Press).*

Playing Tennis

Levels
Beginning–intermediate

Aims
Practice oral and written production of activity words and the verbs they relate to

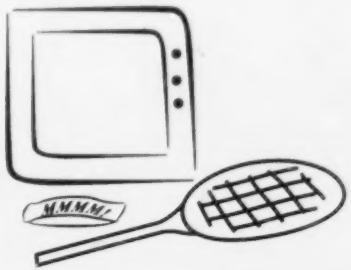
Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Procedure

1. Ask students to get into groups of six.
   - Each student has to say, "I like . . ." and then mime whatever it is he or she likes, for example, playing tennis, eating a bar of chocolate, watching television.
   - The other students have to say what they think the student is miming.
   - As students mime what they like doing, each student has to remember their peers' preferences. If anyone gets stuck, the other students can help.
2. Have the students then write six sentences about what the other students in their group like doing.



Caveats and Options

1. It is not necessary for an activity to always be matched with a verb. The activity may be a free-standing lexical item. For example, if someone mimes *sleeping*, the target sentence would be, *(Tony) likes sleeping.*

2. This game can be played with higher-level students at a greater level of sophistication using lower frequency count lexical items, *playing squash* (the student mimes a faster racket game than tennis), *eating Chinese or Asian food* (the student mimes eating with chopsticks), *going to the races* (the student mimes looking through binoculars and getting increasingly excited).

Contributor

Dino Mahoney is Senior Lecturer in the English Department of the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. He teaches on BA and MA TESL programs including the teaching of modules on drama in ESL. He has also lived and taught in England, Greece, and the United Arab Emirates.

Close the Gap

Levels
Any

Aims
Practice vocabulary in contexts
Practice communication strategies

Class Time
5–10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Procedure

1. While talking (explaining/describing something, telling a story and so on) to the students, challenge them by leaving a key vocabulary part blank by pretending you have forgotten it. Pause or ask, "What?", or supply bridging questions like, "Ah, I can't remember that word, can you?" or "What's that word again?"
2. Wait until one of the students can fill the gap with a correct word or phrase.
3. If somebody gives you the correct response, say, "Ah, that's right," repeat the response, and continue on. If nobody comes up with a proper expression in 2 or 3 seconds, cover up the gap saying, "Ah, now I remember."

Caveats and Options

Students can do the same by leaving one or two gaps like this in their speech for other students to fill while listening, either on purpose (for practice of specific vocabulary items) or when they have genuinely forgotten a word or phrase.

Contributor

Jong-Oe Park teaches English in Japan. He has also taught English in South Korea at the secondary and tertiary levels.

ESL Scrabble

Levels
Any

Aims
Use a monolingual dictionary

Class Time
30–45 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Scrabble set for each group of 4–12 students
Monolingual dictionary

The game of Scrabble is an entertaining way to learn and use vocabulary even for native speakers. However, certain adjustments in the rules can improve the teaching value of the game.

Procedure

1. Using volunteers from the class, demonstrate how the game will be played. Have each volunteer receive seven Scrabble tiles and play one word on the board. Demonstrate how to calculate the score for each word.
2. Divide the students into groups of either 4, 8 or 12 students. Form four teams out of each group. (The higher the level of the students, the smaller the group size should be.) Select one student from each group to keep a record of the scores. Select another student to be timekeeper.
3. Explain the following rules:
   - Students must use the seven tiles they have to add a word connected to the words already on the board.
   - Students have only 1 minute to place their word on the board.
   - Students only score points for words that they can successfully define and use in a sentence. (Reading the dictionary definition does not count.)

- At the end of each turn, a team should replace the letters it has used.
- In the event of any controversy, the teacher will be the sole judge.

Caveats and Options

1. No word of fewer than three letters will be given any score.
2. If one team cannot successfully play or define a word, the next team has the right to complete the task and receive the points.
3. The teacher can replace the letters held by any team to make their task either easier or more difficult.
4. A team receives double points for any word played and defined without using their dictionary.

Contributor

Hugh Rutledge graduated from Boston University in 1988. He has taught in East Asia for several years and is Head of Faculty at Tokyo International College, in Japan.

Vocabulary Bingo

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Review numbers, the alphabet, body parts, or other semantic groups
Improve aural comprehension of previously studied vocabulary

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Bingo grid with 25 squares (5 rows x 5 columns)
One list of words per game

Procedure

1. Give each student a bingo grid sheet or have the students draw their own grid sheet. Each square should be big enough to accommodate one of the words.
2. Put a list of words on the board. The list could consist of numbers, the alphabet, parts of the body, days of the week, or names of fruit. The list should consist of around 15 items. Students should copy any of the items into any of the squares. Students can write any item more than once if they want, but it is best to set a limit, for example, three times per word. Thus, it is all right if the master list on the board has only 15 items because each item may be written up to three times.

BINGO				
7			arm	
		Tues day		
		leg		
pear			11	

3. Have the students work as a class. (If you have more than 20 students, you might want to divide the class into two groups.) Student A begins by choosing one of the words (preferably one of the words on his paper) and then saying any simple sentence with that word. The other students have to listen carefully and put an X or some kind of marker on that word if it appears on their grid. For each time a word is called out, an X or marker can be put on only one word. For example, if *cat* is called out and appears on a student's grid three times, *cat* should only be marked one time when it is called out. If *cat* is called out by another student at another time, then and only then can an X or marker be put on the second *cat*.
4. When any student has bingo in any three rows, he shouts "Bingo." If students have used markers (instead of writing on their papers), the game may be played again and again.

Caveats and Options

For beginning levels, stick with concrete items such as the alphabet, numbers, names of fruit. Make the students use these kinds of patterns for their sentences:

(alphabet) The first letter of *apple* is A.
(numbers) I have *10* fingers.
(names of fruit) I don't like *oranges*.

Reviewing vocabulary—not just one time but several—is a necessary part of successfully mastering any language. This game idea has worked well in class. As with any activity, this game should be short and somewhat fast paced to maintain the interest of the entire group.

Contributor

Nadine Battaglia is a French and English instructor at Language Academy, in Maebashi, Japan. She previously taught French as a second language in intensive courses in France.

Computer-Assisted Vocabulary Review With Hangman

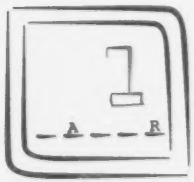
Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Review vocabulary met in a text

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
IBM Hangman, Version 4.1



With this on-screen version of Hangman, the computer replaces the letters of the word with dashes and the player reconstructs the word by guessing letters. One part of the human being on the screen is lost (and finally hung) with each incorrect guess.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is a great way to add variety and excitement to lessons as students are generally fascinated by using computer equipment. The following activity is an easy way to introduce students to computers and make them practice a lot of vocabulary.

Procedure

1. For homework ask the students to prepare from the class text up to 10 words with accompanying hints such as definitions, synonyms, opposites, and contexts.
2. Do a classroom activity to review these words, such as pronunciation practice or a spelling test.
3. Practice using the Hangman computer program by getting one student to type in a word or phrase related to the text, such as the name of a character or object. The other student in the pair tries to guess using Hangman while listening to the first student give clues about the character or object.
4. Begin the main Hangman activity. Student A types in one of the prepared words while B is not looking. Student A gives clues (definition, synonyms, opposite) for the word. Once this word has been discovered, the roles reverse.

Note

IBM Hangman Version 4.1 (1983) is available from Eric N. Miller & Norland Software, 10/4A West Badger Road, Madison, WI 53713, USA. This is shareware software.

Contributor

Elizabeth Lange currently teaches at Temple University Japan. She has also taught ESL/EFL in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea.

♦ Working With Definitions
Guess My Word

Levels
Any

Aims
Recycle vocabulary

Class Time
15–20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Three words per student
A list of 20 words

This task enables students to revise vocabulary in a lively, interactive manner.

Procedure

1. Select 12 vocabulary items that you would like the students to revise. Divide the students into groups of four; distribute three different words from the list, plus the full list of 20 words to each student in the group. Ask students not to show their particular words to the others.
2. Using two volunteers from the class, demonstrate how to do the task. Have Student A explain, demonstrate, or give an example of the meaning of one of the three words, without using the word. Student B must guess which word it is in the list, then circle the correct word. In turns, each pair of students continues to negotiate the meaning of their six words until all six have been circled. Students C and D do the same with their words.
3. When both pairs have finished, Student A pairs off with Student C, Student B with D. Each person explains the six words circled on their list to their partner.
4. Upon completion, quickly elicit which of the 20 words were chosen. Select some students to share their responses.

Caveats and Options

1. To add an element of competition, time the groups.
2. When students finish, they can continue to explain the other words on the list.
3. If time permits, give each student only two words and expand the full word list. Break students off into new pairs with a new partner each time they finish negotiating their words.

Contributor

Angela Joe has taught English to Japanese students in Japan and in New Zealand for 4 years. She is currently studying toward an MA in Applied Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand.

Pair Crosswords With Hangman

Levels
Intermediate +

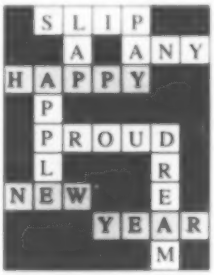
Aims
Review previously met vocabulary

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
A simple crossword puzzle with clues

The crossword puzzle can be based on one vertical word or phrase that may be a hidden message, for example, Happy New Year.



Procedure

1. Give each learner in the pair half the crossword puzzle, with clues for every second line in the puzzle.
2. Have learner A tell learner B the definition of the wanted word. If B cannot figure it out from this clue, use the Hangman game with the letters of the word mixed up. If learner B still cannot guess, A says the last letter is _____.
2. Reverse the roles to work on the next line in the puzzle.

Contributor

Elizabeth Lange currently teaches at Temple University Japan. She has also taught ESL/EFL in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea.

Guess the Word

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Recycle known vocabulary

Class Time
15–30 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
List of words to review

The activity stimulates two sorts of mental processes connected to recalling words or their meanings. The learners acting as prompters have to recognize a word and then think of its meanings, connotations, frequent contexts, or collocations in order to find an efficient way of getting their partners to guess the word. The guessers have to search their mental store of meanings, associations, and contexts for a lexical item that falls within the gradually narrowing semantic bounds suggested by their partner. Both processes seem to parallel processes that are thought to be used in understanding and producing language.

Procedure

1. Have learners sit in pairs, one partner facing the front of the room and one facing the back.
2. Present five of the items to be reviewed on the board or overhead projector. In each pair, the student facing the front chooses one of the items and begins to define it or suggest it in some other way (e.g. by describing a situation, giving a context, miming), so that the partner can guess it.
3. Continue this with pairs working simultaneously until most pairs have finished all five.
4. Then have the partners switch seats and roles, and offer five new items for review.

Caveats and Options

Have the partner who gives the definitions and other prompts draw them instead of saying them. Some high intermediate learners forced this variation upon me against my protests about conveying abstract words. It seemed to be just as effective as the verbal method, producing a lot of

semantically relevant guessing. It does help, though, if learners are conscious of the sets of words that might come up for review.

Contributor

Heather Murray teaches at Universität Bern in Switzerland.

Split Vocabulary

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Match vocabulary and definitions

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
25 minutes

Resources
Handouts

Procedure

1. Prepare two sheets with approximately 50 items per sheet. For each pair of students, prepare sheets mixed with words, true statements about the word, and distractors. Here is an example:

Learner A	Learner B
1x We can read it	1 A book
2 Run	2x We sit down and do this
3x Like a circle	3 square
4 It is nice to eat	4x fruit

   The learner with the cross next to the number (1x) says the number and reads the sentence aloud. The other learner says the word next to the number. The learners decide if their items are the same or different and write *S* or *D* on their sheet (In the example, 1 is the same, 2 is different, 3 is different, and 4 is the same). The learners must not look at each other's sheet.
2. After doing five items, have the learners can change partners and do the next 5 items.

Caveats and Options

Use a picture instead of a word. Put the cross next to the item with the picture so that the learner with the picture has to recall its name.

Contributor

Paul Nation has trained teachers in Indonesia and the United States.

Matching Synonyms

Levels
Beginning–intermediate

Aims
Recognize synonyms

Class Time
15–30 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Set of 30 index cards for each pair of students
Monolingual English dictionary for each pair of students

Matching games are popular among English-speaking children and adults and among speakers of other languages, so this activity requires little preteaching.

Procedure

1. On one side of each card, write an English word, making sure that each set of 30 cards contains 15 synonyms.
2. Using volunteers from the class, demonstrate how the game will be played. Place the 30 cards face down in five rows. Ask the first student to turn over two cards. If the cards are synonyms, the student keeps the two cards and takes another turn. Otherwise, both are placed face-down in their original positions. The second student repeats the process.
3. If the students do not know the meaning of one word, tell them to look the word up in the dictionary. If they do not agree whether two words are synonyms, they must ask for the teacher's judgment.
4. Explain that the player with the most cards after all the cards have been matched is the winner of the game.
5. Divide the class into pairs. Give one set of cards to each pair. If time permits, play a second game, making sure each player is using a new set of cards.

Caveats and Options

Instead of pairs, divide the class into groups of four so that two players cooperate as a team. This allows the teacher to monitor the progress of each game more effectively.

Contributor

Hugh Rutledge graduated from Boston University in 1988. He has taught in East Asia for several years and is Head of Faculty at Tokyo International College, in Japan.

Twenty Questions

Levels
Any

Aims
Reinforce vocabulary groups, such as occupations, food, clothing, furniture, family, hobbies

Class Time
20 minutes

Resources
Slips of paper

Contributor

Procedure

1. Write one item from the target vocabulary group on each slip of paper. Make sure there is at least one slip for each student. Items chosen will depend on the target vocabulary. Examples:

   Occupations: policeman, typist, cleaner, bus driver
   Furniture: bed, chair, wardrobe, chest of drawers

2. Put the folded slips in a container and let each student choose one. The other students must then ask questions. The questions can only be answered Yes or No. For instance:

   Occupations: Do you earn a lot of money?
   Furniture: Is it found in the kitchen?

The class must work out the answer in 20 questions or fewer.

Carol Griffiths is an ESOL teacher in Auckland, New Zealand.

Draw-a-Word Game

Levels
Any

Aims
Make visual representations of vocabulary items

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Large sheets of paper
Pencils
Coloring pens

Before doing the following activity, the students should already have been taught the meanings of the words and their pronunciation.

Procedure

1. Divide the students into Teams X and Y. (Let students choose their team names.) Give each team nine review words.
2. Have the members of each team work together (each team on a separate side of the room) to draw pictures representing six of the words. All members are to offer ideas, but the group must decide which is the best idea and who is the best person to draw it.
3. Each picture is drawn on a large piece of paper so that, when shown from the front of the room, all students can see it. The word should be written in the top right-hand corner on the back for the teacher (small letters so only the teacher sees).
4. Circulate among the students. If a drawing is too sloppy or too abstract, make the students redo it.
5. One representative from each team comes up with the drawings. (The same representatives remain at the front of the class for the entire game.) The representative from Team X holds up the first drawing. Inhibit talking (e.g., telling the answers) with a fine of 3 points. Keep a record of points on the blackboard.
6. As the members of Team Y who want to guess the words hold up their hands, call on one of them. If the person guesses correctly, give Team Y 5 points. Then have the representative from Team Y hold up a picture for Team X to guess and continue play.
7. If the answer is incorrect, call on someone else from Team Y. If that person guesses correctly, Team Y gets 3 points. If that person guesses

incorrectly, call on a third person from Team Y. A correct response earns 1 point; an incorrect response results in a loss of 3 points (− 3).

8. Then have the representative from Team Y hold up the team's drawing and continue play as above. The team with the most points at the end wins.

Contributor

Tracy M. Mannon teaches at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland. She has also taught in the People's Republic of China and at the University of Delaware in the United States.

Listening/Speaking Crosswords for Vocabulary Practice

Levels
Any

Aims
Recycle vocabulary

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Crossword grid with down and across clues
Overhead projector (OHP)

Crosswords are a great way to recycle and reinforce vocabulary. Many texts have accompanying workbooks with crosswords that practice the vocabulary and structures introduced in the text. These, as well as crosswords that make use of general vocabulary appropriate for the students' level, can be adapted to make listening/speaking pair work activities which involve lots of use of the required vocabulary and structures, guessing words from a listening context, and fun. This activity works well with beginning students but can be adapted for other levels.

Procedure

1. Enlarge a crossword grid. You will need one for each pair. Divide the clues into across and down; one of each for each pair.
2. Preteach the following types of phrases:
   - What's 6 across?
   - What's 3 down?
   - Pardon.
   - I'm sorry. I don't understand, could you say that again?
   - How do you spell that?
   - Pass.
3. Have the students sit facing each other. Give the grid to one student and one set of clues, the down clues, to the other. While one student reads the clue, the other tries to guess the answer and write it down. Neither has the answers but as this is not their first time encountering the words, they should between them be able to progress quite quickly.
4. As each pair completes what they can of the first half of the clues, give out the second set, the across clues, then switch their roles and

let them finish. Toward the end, students should be working together to puzzle out the ones they do not know.

The atmosphere is competitive because each pair wants to be the first to finish. The teacher's role is to circulate, offering extra hints if needed, to check that students are being fairly accurate, and to ensure they are using the target language.

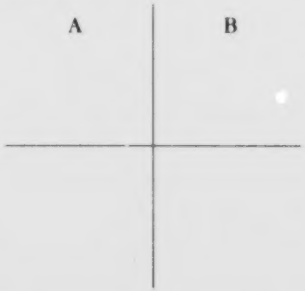
5. After most of the pairs have finished, have a quick round-the-class check. Then, leaving students in pairs, give one student the clue sheet to test the other student:

   A: I was hungry _____ I ate a hamburger.
   B: So.

   A: Yes, good. I take a _____ to school.
   B: Train.

   Encourage them to read and answer quickly. They can change roles and change pairs. I circulate, saying, "Is she perfect?" If they say Yes, I test them and change the clue a little, for example, "I _____ a train to school."

6. When everyone knows the words pretty well, divide the class into two teams and write on the board:



   Have one student keep the score. Read the clue sentences quickly. The first team to answer gets a point. Halfway through, have another student continue reading the clues.

7. At the end of the exercise, collect all the grids and clues, and then hand out complete copies of the crossword to each student, or refer them to the page in their workbooks and have them do it again for homework.

Caveats and Options

1. As a quick review of vocabulary, use one copy of a crossword per pair. Have one student use a red pen and the other a blue pen. Students read the clues and fill in the grid as quickly as they can. When they have finished, they can count up the red and blue letters and see who has the most.
2. Using an OHP, make a large crossword grid on the wall. Divide students into a red group and a blue group. Have each group ask for clues in turn. Read the clue aloud. If the red group guesses correctly, write the word in red. If not, give the blue group a try. When the crossword has been completed, count up the red and the blue squares to find the winner.

Contributor

Sonia Millett teaches at Temple University Japan.

Find the Sentence

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Individualize review vocabulary

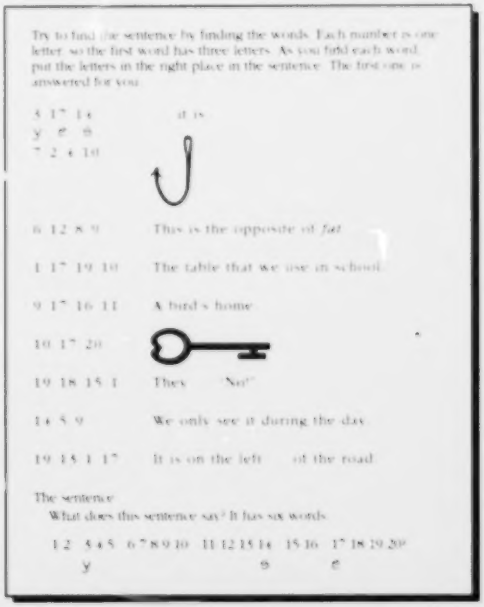
Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
A prepared Find the Sentence activity

Procedure

1. Prepare exercises similar to the following example.



Try to find the sentence by finding the words. Each number is one letter, so the first word has three letters. As you find each word, put the letters in the right place in the sentence. The first one is answered for you.

5 17 14 — it is

y e s

7 2 4 10

6 12 8 9 — This is the opposite of *fat*.

1 17 19 10 — The table that we use in school.

9 17 16 11 — A bird's home.

10 17 20

19 18 15 1 — They ... No!"

14 5 9 — We only see it during the day.

19 15 1 17 — It is on the left ... of the road.

The sentence

What does this sentence say? It has six words.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

y s e

2. Have the learners do the exercises in their free time. The work does not need to be corrected.

Contributor

Paul Nation trains ESL and EFL teachers.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Find the Right Definition

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Learn vocabulary from classmates

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
A sample multiple-choice item

Contributor

Procedure

1. Divide the class into groups of three or four students. Ask each group to choose a word or set of words to define. This should be a word they think other students in the class will not know.
2. Tell each group to prepare one true definition of each word they have chosen and two false definitions. Set a time limit. For example:

   Elation: a feeling of great happiness and excitement (true)
   a cream applied to burns
   a procedure for selecting civil servants

3. Ask the groups to take turns reading their definitions aloud once only. Others try to guess which of the three definitions is the true one.

Ronald Jackup is a freelance teacher and course designer.

Define and Match

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Peer teach vocabulary

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Sets of vocabulary cards
Worksheets (see Appendix below)

Procedure

1. Give half of the class a list of words and the other half a list of definitions.
2. Ask the learners with the words to try to give a meaning in English and the learners with the definitions to try to think of the defined words.
3. Have the learners form pairs, with one learner having a list of words and the other a list of definitions. They match the words with the definitions and see how many they got correct.

Continues on next page

107

Appendix: Sample Worksheets

WORDS	MEANINGS
a name	
a family name or a surname	
a given name or a Christian name	
a signature	
a title	
an initial letter	
initials	
a monogram	
a vowel	
a consonant	

MEANINGS	WORDS
the word by which an individual person, place, or thing is spoken of	
the name common to all members of a family	
two or more letters, especially of a person's initial, woven together	
a speech sound in which the air stream is partly stopped	
the name of a book or poem	
a way of showing a person's status; it is put before their name	
a speech sound in which the flow of air is not stopped	
the letters at the beginning of a person's names	
a letter at the beginning of a word	
a person's name or initials used in signing	
the name that is chosen for a child to distinguish it from other members of the family	

Contributor

Dorothy Brown has trained teachers and taught English in Australia, New Zealand, and China.

♦ Words and Actions
Total Physical Response Vocabulary Practice

Levels
Beginning; children

Aims
Recognize known vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
A box or bag containing cards

Procedure

1. Put together a box or paper bag containing cards with commands written on them, for example, *Put the red crayon in the box, Sit on the table, Stand up, Put a book under the chair.*
2. Seat the children in a circle.
3. Ask the first child to select a card from the box, read it aloud, put the card in a pocket chart, and perform the required action.
4. If the child is correct, she or he chooses the next child to pick a card. If the child is not correct, then she or he chooses another child to help perform that action and the two children do it together.
5. Continue the game until everyone has had a chance to pick a card, read it, and do what it says.

Caveats and Options

1. If some children in the group are reading and others are not, the children can be paired so that there is a reader who reads the card and an actor who demonstrates what the words mean.
2. Divide the class into two teams. As each child picks a card, reads it, and does what it says, the child's team gets a point. If a child is not correct, the card goes to the next member of the opposing team.
3. Separate the class into groups of four with a high-achieving child, a low-achieving child, and two average-achieving children in each group. Instead of writing the entire command on one card, separate the words so that one word is written on a card. Give each group all of the cards for one complete command. (For example, one card

has *on*, one card has *sit*, one card has *the*, and one card has *table*.) The children have to get in line in the correct order and then do what the cards tell them to do.

Contributor

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Total Physical Response Verb Practice

Levels
Beginning; children

Aims
Recall and recognize known vocabulary

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Procedure

1. Seat the children in a circle.
2. Perform an action and ask, "What am I doing?" and call on a child for the answer. The child answers, for example, "You are walking." If the child's answer is correct, the child performs a different action and asks, "What am I doing?" and calls on another child for the answer. This continues until all of the children have had a few turns.

Caveats and Options

1. A child picks a card with an action written on it and then performs that action. The other children guess what she or he is doing. The child who guesses correctly goes next.
2. Separate children into groups of four with a high-achieving child, a low-achieving child, and two average-achieving children in each group. Give each group three cards describing an action. For example, one card has *am*, one card has *I*, one card has *jumping*. Three children have to get in line in the correct order and the fourth child has to perform the action.

Contributor

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Hit the Word

Levels
Beginning; children

Aims
Practice auditory and visual discrimination of words

Class Time
15–20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Words written on cards or on the blackboard

Procedure

1. Teach students how to sound out words based on the phonics approach. Once they are able to read and identify words through sound, the following activity can be used to reinforce these skills for vocabulary development.
2. Write about 10 words on the blackboard for students to give further practice, for example, 10 verbs in the past tense.
3. Decide on two teams and give them names, for example, Cockroach and Dracula.
4. Draw a line on the floor about one meter (about 39 inches) away from and running in parallel to the blackboard. Ask one student from each team to stand behind the line. Explain (and demonstrate) the rules of the game as follows:

   Listen to the sentence/dialogue and hit a word on the board that corresponds with one in the sentence/dialogue. The first student to hit the correct word gains a point for the team. Example: Write on the board past tense verbs *ran*, *came*, *went*, and so on.

   Then say: "Yesterday, Peter ran to school." A student runs to the blackboard and hits the word *ran*.

Caveats and Options

On a table, put five or six words the students have learned through the phonics method to read and identify through listening. Make two rows of students behind the table, for example, one row of boys and one row of girls. Stand behind the table and sound out one word. Whoever can hit the word first can sit down. The first team to have no members left wins.

Contributor

Elizabeth Lange currently teaches at Temple University Japan. She has also taught ESL/EFT in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea.

Who's My Partner?

Levels
Any

Aims
Decide seating arrangements while reviewing vocabulary

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Strips of paper approximately 5 centimeters (about 2 inches) × 10 centimeters (about 4 inches); half of the paper strips should have a different color (shape or size) from the other half

Every teacher has to contend with the tendency of students always sitting next to or deciding to work with the same person in class. The following is a creative, stress-free and productive way of solving this problem. It simultaneously achieves the aims of warm-up (if used at the beginning of a lesson) and vocabulary review, thus killing two (or three?) birds with one stone.

Procedure

1. Either you or each student (if time allows) should copy part of a sentence containing an idiomatic expression onto a strip of colored paper. Copy the other part of the idiomatic expression onto another colored strip. Choose the sentences from a specified unit of the textbook. If necessary, give students different pages of the textbook to choose from to avoid repetition. If practice of conjunctions, transition expressions, or other connectors used to combine sentences are involved here, include them in one of the two matching strips. Examples of this are:

	Yellow Strips	Blue Strips
1a	Please *call* me	*by* my first name.
1b	Peter *went*	*with* Sally for 2 years before getting married.
2a	I was late for school	*because* my alarm clock didn't work.
3a	Mr. Suzuki worked hard all year;	*as a result*, he was promoted.

2. Collect the strips of paper.

3. Select half of the strip pairs according to the number of students in class. You can use the rest later.
4. Jumble them up, fan them out, and hold them up (or put them in a nontransparent bag) so that students cannot see them. Ask each student to take one.
5. Ask the students to memorize their part in about 30 seconds and not show it to anybody. They should then return it to you.
6. Ask the students to walk around and talk to each other until they find a match.
7. Once they are all seated, ask them to say their part aloud so the others can hear and you can check.

Caveats and Options

1. If there is an odd number of students, the one who cannot find a partner can go to the teacher. (The teacher will have the other part, thus becoming a partner when the situation requires it.)
2. If the sentences are not related to each other, the first pair can choose where to sit together, and so on.
3. However, if the sentences are related in the form of an extended dialogue, the students should sit in the order of the dialogue.

Contributor

Jong-Oe Park teaches English in Japan. He has also taught English in South Korea at the secondary and tertiary levels.

♦ Revising Words in Sentences Back-to-Back

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Consolidate oral and written production of "clothing" and "colors" lexical sets

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

This motivating vocabulary building game gives real beginners active practice in using Color and Clothing lexical sets.

Procedure

1. Ask students to sit back-to-back in pairs. Student A, without turning round, has to describe what articles of clothing Student B is wearing and what color they are, for example, "You are wearing a white T-shirt." Student B then does the same for Student A. Both students turn to face each other and check to see if their descriptions were accurate.
2. Have students write a brief description of the student they played the back-to-back game with.

Caveats and Options

1. If there is enough space, ask students to slowly walk about the room observing what everyone else is wearing. At any given moment ask students to stand back-to-back with whomever is closest to them. Ask these pairs to follow the procedure described above. When everyone has finished, ask the whole class to continue walking about the room and again, at any given moment, ask students to pair up and repeat the procedure. This may be repeated four or five times.
2. To avoid having students shout to each other during the description process, ask them to keep the backs of their heads close together and to talk sideways to each other.

116

Contributor

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117

Vocabulary Match-Ups and Sentence Writing

Levels
Any

Aims
Practice vocabulary in meaningful contexts

Class Time
25–30 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Vocabulary cards

Procedure

Before doing the following activity, teach the students the meanings of the words and their pronunciation. Before class, write all the words to be reviewed and the matching definitions in blocks on separate sheets of paper, as below:

predict
precede

to foretell
to go or come before

1. If there are 20 students, give 10 students a word and 10 students the corresponding definition.
2. Have students mill about the room, looking for their partners.
3. When students have found their partners, have them sit together and write an interesting sentence that clearly shows that they know the meaning of the word.
4. One representative from each pair to come up to the board to write the sentence. To save time, have three or four students write at the same time.
5. Go over the sentences one at a time, first having the other students from the pair read the sentence out loud. Have the class correct the sentences as necessary.
6. Copy down the sentences to be used later on a quiz or review sheet.

Contributor

Tracy M. Mannon teaches at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland. She has also taught in the People's Republic of China and at the University of Delaware in the United States.

Vocabulary Exchange Game

Levels
Any

Aims
Review vocabulary with context clues

Class Time
40 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Strips of paper approximately 3.5 centimeters (about 1.5 inches) by 18 centimeters (about 7 inches)

This is a highly interactive activity. Because the learners write the hints, they must use their known English to explain unknown English words to someone else.

Procedure

1. Have the students choose one different word from a text all the students have read, by allotting different pages or sections for each student to choose from. Make sure the students do not tell anyone what word they chose.
2. Have them write a sentence or more on their strip of paper containing and explaining the word they chose. They should leave the chosen word blank but can supply hints. You need to supply enough examples so that the students understand exactly what to do when they write their sentences.

   The following are two examples to illustrate how to write context clues that leave the key word blank.

   Apples, oranges, grapes and *pears* are examples of _____.

   (Additional hints might be that it is a noun and consists of five letters.)

   Peter got high grades for all his subjects. He will certainly pass. He is much better than a satisfactory-level student. In fact, he is an _____ student.

   (Additional hints might be that it is an adjective beginning with *o-* and ending with *-ing*.)

   You may also need to check each student's context clues and make sure the students are equipped with expressions such as *Once more*

please, Please give me more hints, How many letters are there?, You are getting close!

3. When ready to begin, have the whole class stand up, each person finding a partner to explain their context clues to and give other hints for their particular word. They must use eye contact while explaining and keep giving hints until their partner guesses the word.
4. Then have them exchange roles. When each pair has guessed each other's words, they have to exchange strips of paper and find a new partner. The process continues until each student has exchanged strips of paper as many times as there are students in the class.
5. Finally, test the students on the vocabulary items.

Contributor

Elizabeth Lange currently teaches at Temple University Japan. She has also taught ESL/EFL in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea.

Verb Group Game

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Review vocabulary productively
Practice correct use of verb groups

Class Time
1 hour

Preparation Time
30 minutes

Resources
Set of 40 verb cards for each group of four or five
Set of 40 auxiliary verb cards for whole class

This activity is an enjoyable way to practice verbs and provide practice in the grammatical accuracy of verb groups. It allows students to try using new words and to discuss whether the use is right or wrong. Some very heated discussions can result. Although the activity has a grammar focus, it contributes to vocabulary learning by encouraging creative use of newly met verbs.

Procedure

1. Prepare vocabulary cards in advance (e.g., on index cards). The requirements may be a little too complex for students to do this preparation, although, if time permits, you could try.
   You need (for each group of four or five students):

   40 auxiliary verb cards: 10 modal verbs
   10 forms of *have* (i.e., *have*, *had*, *has*)
   20 forms of *be* (i.e., *is*, *was*, *are*, *were*)
   40 verb cards using words currently being studied by the students:
   10 stem forms
   10 *-ing* forms (present participles)
   10 *-ed* forms (past participles)

   It is best if the auxiliary verb cards are all on a different color card from the verb cards to avoid confusion.
2. Give groups one set of auxiliary verb cards and one set of verb cards. The auxiliary verb cards are placed face down in the middle of the table. All the verb cards are dealt to the players—an equal number to each player.
3. The first player takes a card from the top of the auxiliary verb pile and places it face up on the table.

- The player then looks at the cards in her hand to see if they include a verb form that can go with the auxiliary verb just turned over.
- If she does, she places the verb card next to the auxiliary verb card so that everyone can see it.
- The player must then say a sentence using the verb group she has created.
- If the group agrees the sentence is correct in grammar and meaning, the player keeps the pair of cards.
- If the sentence is considered incorrect, the player must take back her verb card, and return the auxiliary verb card to the bottom of the pile.
- In either case, the next player then has a turn.

4. Be available to settle disputes and answer questions. The winner is the player with most pairs at the end of the game.

Caveats and Options

1. Some students have changed the rules so that a player keeps playing until she makes a mistake. This can be boring if a player is very good and can lead to nobody else getting a turn. Adult groups seem to be quite happy to decide on their own rules, however.
2. When preparing the cards, some care needs to be taken with the choice of which verbs are presented in the *-ed* or *-ing* form so that sentences are able to be formed that make sense and are plausible.

Contributor

Jo Hilder is Assistant Lecturer in the English Language Institute of Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Writing Definitions

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop skill in writing definitions
Learn new vocabulary through defining

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Previously studied words

Contributor

This activity helps students explore the meanings of words and helps them practice writing definitions. It also helps students expand their vocabulary.

Procedure

1. Review a unit of your textbook or anything students have studied recently. Select up to 20 words you think students should remember and be able to use. Choose 5 words each from different parts of speech, or all 20 could be from the same part of speech.
2. Divide the class into groups. Give each group 5 words each. It is easier if each group is working with a set of words with the same part of speech. Ask them to write definitions for each word but not to mention the word they are defining. These should be analytical definitions, rather than synonyms. For example, for the word *medicine* they might write:

   > noun. This is a liquid which you take when you are sick. You get it from the drugstore. Sometimes it doesn't taste very pleasant.

   Note that the definitions should be as complete as possible.
3. Tell groups to exchange definitions and try to guess the words which have been defined.
4. Once all the groups have tried to guess the other groups' words, give them the answers and put some of the definitions on the board. Then have students look up the definitions of the words in the dictionary. What are the differences between the dictionary definition and their definition? What other information is included in the dictionary?

Ronald Jackup is a freelance teacher and course designer.

Tic-Tac-Toe for Vocabulary Review

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Practice and review vocabulary and lexical sets

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
List of words

Tic-Tac-Toe is also known as noughts-and-crosses.

Procedure

1. Divide the class into two teams. Designate one team as O and the other team as X.
2. Draw a tic-tac-toe grid (i.e., 9 squares in a 3 x 3 format; see sample below) on the board and fill each space with vocabulary the students know. (This could be vocabulary studied in the previous lesson.)
3. Demonstrate to the students that the object of the activity is for one team to put three of their team's symbols (O or X) in the grid in a straight line before the other team does the same. The line can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal but must be straight. Team O starts the activity by choosing a word from the grid. Rather than having students just say the word to indicate which one they want, the teacher may choose to make the students say the location of the word, for example, "top left," "bottom right." When the word has been chosen, the students must create a correct sentence using the word. (Set an appropriate time limit, e.g., 30 seconds.) If the sentence is correct, the word is erased from the grid and Team O's marker is put in that place. The turn then moves to Team X who tries and create a correct sentence. If the team makes an error in forming a sentence with the chosen word, the turn moves directly to Team O who tries and give a correct answer. However, if they are correct, they automatically continue with their next turn. The activity continues in this way until one team is successful in producing a straight line in the grid.

4. Once the students become familiar with the activity, it can be carried out as a pair work activity in which one student is O and the other X. In this activity, the teacher may be called upon by different groups of students to comment on the correctness of a completed sentence.

capital	change	cold
match	benefit	end
watch	label	shop

Caveats and Options

1. To increase the team challenge aspect, let teams choose the space containing the word that the other team has to use to make a sentence. For example, Team X calls out "the top right square" because they know that it will be difficult for the other team to make a sentence with the word in that particular square.
2. For homework, the students can create their own grids for their classmates, choosing vocabulary studied in earlier units of a textbook. At the next class meeting, the grids are given out to different groups of students. This alternative is especially valuable because students actually review more vocabulary more frequently than they would in a traditional review exercise: The students will review vocabulary once when they make out their grids with words they have chosen themselves and once again when they complete the game by reviewing words other students have chosen.

Contributor

Jason D. Halstead teaches at Language Academy, in Maebashi, Japan.

Scrambled Idioms in an Envelope

Levels
High intermediate +

Aims
Practice idioms in a task-based activity
Review the grammar of specific idioms

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Cards containing parts of sentences

Procedure

1. On a sheet of paper, write sentences with various idioms the students know. You may also include a few that you want students to guess from the context. If possible, try to create sentences that use two or more idioms at a time. Leave ample space between the sentences (several lines). Cut the sentences into several pieces. Possible places to cut have been indicated with an asterisk (*).

A class has studied these idioms: *let the cat out of the bag, call on, throw in, put off, call off, about to, be off, show up.* Here are sample sentences with these idioms:

John thought that * Mary knew about the party, *

so he didn't realize that he had * let the cat out of the bag.

The teacher usually calls * on students * who are about to fall asleep.

The sauce was * a little off, so * I decided to throw * in some basil.

The game was put * off until * next week * because of the weather.

Mr. Miller called * off the meeting * because the workers * were too busy.

The bride was * about to call * off the wedding, but * the groom suddenly showed * up.

2. Divide the class into pairs or small groups (three to four). You will need one envelope with all 24 pieces per pair or small group.
3. Explain what a scrambled sentence is. If necessary, do an example on the board. (Write a sample sentence in several scrambled chunks. Have the students construct the correct sentence.)
4. Give each pair/group an envelope. Have students empty the contents and count the number of sentence pieces. Using the above sample sentences, there should be 24 pieces. (This step is important. If students don't have all 24 pieces, they cannot complete this task.)
5. Announce a set time limit of 10 minutes. Have the students work as quickly as possible to construct the sentences. Walk around the room and give hints to students who are having some difficulties. Obvious clues should be the capital letters and punctuation. However, the main focus here should be on the meanings of the idioms and any grammatical clues that the students can find.

Caveats and Options

1. Instead of having everyone work on the same set of sentences, prepare five to seven envelopes. Each envelope should have three or four sentences which have been cut up into pieces. On the outside of each envelope, write (in large letters) a number on the envelope and the number of pieces inside (e.g., Envelope Number 4; 13pieces). You will need more envelopes than pairs/groups. For example, if you have five groups, you will need about eight envelopes for this activity. Write the names of the pairs/groups on the board. Have each pair/group choose one envelope and begin working at the same time. When students have finished, they should raise their hands and the teacher should then check their work. If all the sentences are correct, all the pieces should be put back in the envelope. The teacher then writes that envelope number by the students' names on the board (since they have successfully completed that envelope). The students

should then choose one of the remaining envelopes. This task can continue for a certain time limit set by the teacher or until one pair/group has done all of the envelopes.

2. This alternative has a faster pace than the original exercise and is often more entertaining for the students. However, the advantage of the original exercise is that you can review all of the constructed sentences with all of the students very easily.

Contributor

Keith S. Folse is Principal at Language Academy, in Maebashi, Japan. He is the author of English Structure Practices, Intermediate Reading Practices, *and* Talk a Lot *(University of Michigan Press). The idea for Scrambled Idioms came from a former teaching colleague, Beth Powell.*

Two-Step Recycling Cards

Levels
Advanced

Aims
Recall known words using context

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Pairs of vocabulary cards

Two-step recycling assumes that it is easier to recall the meaning of a contextualized word than it is to recall the form of a word from being given its meaning or a context. This learning technique works first on reinforcing comprehension of the word and only afterwards asks learners to supply the word itself as required by a particular context.

This activity has two steps: Learners first only have to recognize new lexical items and remember their meaning in the original context. In a second step, they are required to recall the new items using the context as a prompt.

Procedure

1. Let us assume that the class has read a text on physical exercise. Part of the original text reads:

   Corporations have attempted to improve their employees' health by providing exercise facilities or offering memberships in health clubs.

2. Make a set of about eight cards or slips, each with one or two sentences from the original text containing words thought to be new and worth learning. Leave out some of the words in the sentences. For the first set of cards, use known words that provide the context for the new words. For example, a card for the sentence above might look like this:

> Corporations have attempted _____ improve their employees' health _____ providing exercise facilities or offering memberships _____ health clubs.

3. Have students, working in pairs on a card at a time, decide on the best way to fill in the gaps and then write their answers on the back of the card so that the gaps remain unfilled and other pairs can use the same card.
4. The new vocabulary is actually *improve*, *health*, and *facilities*, so the second time around (perhaps one lesson later) student pairs would be working on cards like the following one, writing their own solutions on the back, as in the first step:

> Corporations have attempted to i_____ their employees' h_____ by providing exercise f_____ or offering memberships in health clubs.

Contributor

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Part III: Enriching Activities

Editor's Note

Enriching activities involve learning new information about previously met words. This can occur through

- gaining new input from the teacher
- extending knowledge of the meaning of words through meeting new uses, new collocations, and new associations
- placing the word in a new context.

Placing the word in a new context can occur as the learners create a context or as they retell a text under new conditions that encourage creative use of the target vocabulary.

The distinction between establishing and enriching activities has been made to make teachers aware of the need both to repeat vocabulary and to extend and elaborate knowledge of particular words.

Knowing a word involves much more than being able to recall the meaning (or L1 translation) of a presented word form. The following list covers most of the aspects involved in knowing a word.

1. Being able to recognize the spoken form of the word
2. Being able to pronounce the word
3. Being able to spell the word
4. Being able to write the word
5. Knowing the underlying meaning of the word
6. Knowing the range of meanings of the word
7. Knowing the grammatical patterns the word fits into
8. Knowing the affixes the word stem can take
9. Knowing the words that fit into the same lexical sets
10. Knowing the typical associations of the word
11. Knowing the range of collocations of the word
12. Knowing whether the use of the word is limited by considerations of politeness, gender, age, country, formality, and so on.

13. Knowing whether the word is commonly used or not
14. Being able to use the word receptively and productively.

These various aspects of knowledge are not all equally important, and their relative importance will depend on particular words. For example, some words need only be used receptively. Many words are neutral with regard to politeness or gender.

The list of aspects can provide a source of points for teacher observation during vocabulary activities. For example, the teacher may try to observe the grammatical patterns that the learners are using with some particular words. This may reveal that the learners are quite developed in their use of the word, or that they are not using or are misusing certain patterns. Similarly, the teacher may wish to observe whether a particular activity is achieving its aim or if a word is being enriched across the range of aspects.

♦ Associations and Lexical Sets
Word Maps

Levels
Any

Aims
Show the connections between words

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Sample word map
Lists of words to put into the map

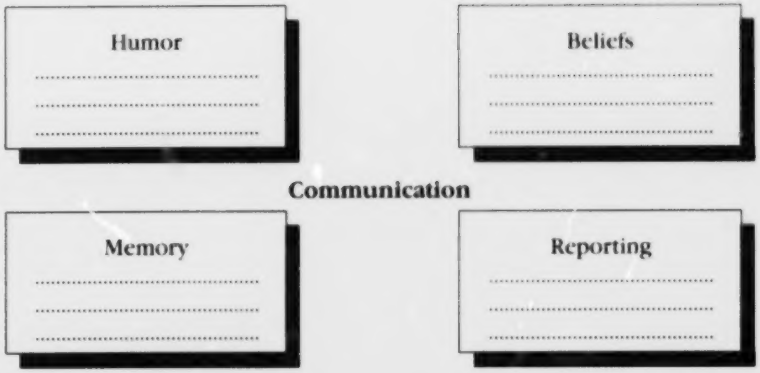
Procedure

1. Prepare a semantic map or chart which shows how a set of words can be grouped or classified.
2. Tell the students to work individually or in pairs to arrange the words on the word map.
3. Ask the students to add further words to each category.

Appendix:
Sample Exercise: Verbs of Communication

1. Add these words to the word map.

doubt	guess	laugh	remember	state	tell
forget	joke	mention	remind	tease	think



2. Can you add two more verbs to each category? (Work in pairs)
   This kind of activity enables learners to see connections between words. This is often a useful device in helping to remember new words.

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

Understanding Occupations

Levels
Any

Aims
Develop the vocabulary related to occupations

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
None

Procedure

1. Prepare a sheet with the following headings.

Skills needed:	Clothes usually worn:	Tools or equipment used:

   Add other categories as appropriate.
2. Divide the class into groups. Give each group a worksheet.
3. Write a list of occupations on the board or ask students for a list of five interesting or unusual occupations.
4. Have students provide as much information as they can about each of the occupations, under the categories on the sheet. Set a time limit (10–15 minutes).
5. Ask a student from each group to present their information. Which group has the most information?

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

Flexible Odd Man Out

Levels
Any

Aims
Practice explaining orally relationships between words

Class Time
15–20 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Minilists of four items, each word on a card

This is a good exercise to review vocabulary. It is especially useful for low levels where students' oral fluency is rather weak. Students at low levels tend to learn vocabulary through translations, but in multilingual classes teachers cannot do review exercises that depend on the L1. This exercise lets students demonstrate their knowledge of vocabulary at their own level.

Procedure

1. Prepare several minilists consisting of four items: Two should belong to one group and two to another group. For example, the list might consist of *tree, flower, red, green*. Write each word on a small piece of paper (5 centimeters (about 2 inches) x 5 centimeters (2 inches)) and then clip them together with a paper clip. The students must work in trios for the exercise, and you will need to prepare about 10 of these clipped lists per group of students.
2. Explain how an odd man out exercise works: In a given group of words, the goal is to find which of the words does not belong. On the board, write *tree, flower,* and *red*. Ask the students which is the odd man out. Then have someone tell why. Next, erase *tree* and substitute *blue*. Again ask which is the odd man out and why.
3. Once students understand the basic idea of odd man out, have them work in trios.
4. Pass out about 10 of the clipped minilists to each trio. (For classroom logistics, put each set of 10 minilists in a large envelope. Make sure the students reclip the four pieces of paper as they finish. In this way the game can be reused many times.)
5. Start the students in a given trio with any one of the 10 minilists. In each minilist there are four pieces of paper, but they each take only

one of the papers so that there is always one extra piece. Each student should read aloud the word on the paper. When all three students have done this, then the one student who has the odd man out word should explain why the word is different.

Caveats and Options

With many oral/aural pair or group work activities, students often overhear and are distracted by what the other students are saying. This problem has been eliminated in this exercise due to two important features: (a) Students will do the 10 minilists in random order and the odds of two groups who are sitting near each other doing the same item at the same time is only 1 in 10 or 10%. (b) In flexible odd man out, there are four papers that three students must choose from; thus, there are four possible combinations (abc, abd, acd, bcd), and this reduces the odds of any groups doing the same item at the same time to almost nil.

Contributor

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Vocabulary Enrichment Through Word Association

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Raise awareness of word associations
Explore words in greater detail

Class Time
15–30 minutes

Preparation Time
10–20 minutes

Resources
List of high frequency words
Charts

Students cannot always give definitions for words for which they have a good sense (at least receptively). Likewise, they may be able to give a definition of a word quite easily, but not be able to use the word. Having students give as many associations as they can provides insight in both these areas and can indicate to students where they may need to explore words further.

Procedure

1. Prepare charts with 10 words for associations, such as the following:

Word	Associated Words (in 30 seconds)
1. drink	
2. store	
3. etc.	

2. Put students into a circle, and for a few minutes play a word association game. In this game, say a word and then ask each student to say the first word to come to mind. Students can listen to each other's first words and try to understand how the association was made. (An option would be to have students write the first word that comes to their minds for each of 10 words the you say. In either case you may want to have students share their answers, to raise awareness of varied associations made.)
3. Pass out a sheet with 10 words, and tell students you will give them 30 seconds for each word, in which they should write as many words associated with the given word as they can.
4. Tell the students to begin, and at the end of 30 seconds call out, "Next word." Continue to do this until all 10 words have been covered.

5. Have students go back through the list and circle any words for which they could not get many associations. Tell them that these words are ones that warrant spending time with their dictionaries (e.g., noting alternate meanings, phrasal uses, collocations). You may want to allow class time for this.

Some words lend themselves to alternate meanings and a large variety of associations, while others are much more limited. Therefore, it is advisable to have a native speaker (or other successful user of the language) do this exercise with each sheet of 10 words before you give them to the students, to give yourself an idea of reasonable expectations for each word in the list.

Contributor

Kenny Harsch is Director of English Education at Kobe YMCA College, Japan. He is interested in learner autonomy, student-centered curriculum development, and helping students discover their own uses for English. He also believes in developing students' ownership of the direction their learning takes. The idea for this activity came from a discussion with Norbert Schmitt, who is currently doing his doctoral dissertation on a related aspect of vocabulary acquisition.

Connections

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop a deeper understanding of word meanings

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
List of words to review

This activity involves students working with a group of words and trying to find connections between them.

Procedure

1. Choose a group of 10–15 words that you want students to review. These could be taken from anything the students have been studying. The words should be of a similar part of speech to enable students to make connections more easily. For example: *style, comfort, sample, combination, service, guarantee, advertisement, parade, index.*
2. Divide the class into groups. Ask groups to think of connections between the words on the list. Can they arrange the words into groups, and explain the connections between them? Give an example to help them get started, such as one from the list above:

   Comfort and *service* can go together. They can both be used to describe a hotel. A hotel should provide comfort, and the service should be good.

   Sample and *advertisement* can go together. When you want to buy something in a store, you will see advertisements for different things (paint, carpets, curtains), often with different samples for you to choose from.

3. Set a time limit for the activity: 10–15 minutes.
4. Ask group leaders to present their group's combinations to the class. Who could make the most connections between the words on the list?

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

Missing Words

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop prediction skills
Practice guessing from context
Learn collocation patterns

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Cloze text

Procedure

1. Select a paragraph or short text at a suitable level for your class. Delete selected words from the text. Number the blanks in the text. Select words that cannot be predicted too easily but allow prediction.
2. Divide the class into groups, and give each group a copy of the text. Ask them to think of as many words as possible that could go into the missing sections of the text.
3. Ask a member of each group to come to the board and write up their suggestions for each blank.
4. Ask students to compare their suggestions. Are they all acceptable? Would they reject any? Why?
5. Give the class feedback on their suggestions. Use this phase of the activity to develop the students' awareness of lexical choice, vocabulary restrictions, and collocation.

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

142

Sorting Words as Review

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop and extend semantic networks

Class Time
20–30 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
List of items

This activity helps learners remember the meanings of recently encountered lexical items. In a first step they are asked (indirectly) to examine the semantic network they have constructed for the item. The second step, which consists of comparison and discussion with other learners, serves to make them aware of gaps and misunderstandings as well as to extend their semantic networks. The activity can therefore be classified as a review exercise for "passive" control, in other words, for recognition and comprehension.

Procedure

1. From the lexical items to be reviewed or recycled, select between 10 and 15 and either dictate them to the class or present them on the board or overhead projector.
2. Ask the learners to think of three categories into which they could sort the words according to their meanings. It is up to them to decide on categories.
3. When they have done this, they sit in small groups and compare categories and how they sorted the words, justifying their categories and discussing meanings. The discussion may be either in the L1 or L2, depending on class level.

Caveats and Options

1. Give the categories as well as the words, but this is only interesting when it does not look like a test, that is, when there are a number of plausible sortings for learners to discuss afterwards. Here is an example. Let us say that the lexical items selected for review come from a reading text and subsequent discussion on physical fitness.

They are:

daily exercise	*health clubs*	*exercise facilities*
gym outfits	*stress*	*consumer society*
equipment	*body building*	*leisure time*
urban life	*aerobics*	*advertising campaigns*

2. After re-presenting the lexical items, ask the learners to sort them into categories labeled Luxury, Normal, and To be avoided. Another set of categories might be Expensive, Cheap, and Free. Categories like these introduce a new perspective and, at the same time, clearly indicate that sortings will depend on opinion and not fact.
3. The small-group discussion after the sorting phase is essential because this is the time when the known meanings and connotations of the lexical items are discussed. The teacher will want to circulate among the groups, answering questions and listening for misunderstandings.

Contributor

Heather Murray teaches at Universität Bern in Switzerland.

Odd Man Out and Nonverbal Communication

Levels
High intermediate +

Aims
Learn cultural connotations of words associated with the body

Class Time
30–45 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Lists of items (see Appendix below)
English-English dictionary

Students are often confused by semantically similar words for gestures, facial expressions, and other forms of nonverbal communication. Furthermore, they are frequently only incidentally made aware of the cultural connotations of these words as well as the behavior to which they refer.

This adaptation of an activity known as Odd Man Out can be carried out by students working in groups or individually and then in small groups. Depending upon the level of the class, students may be allowed to work with an English-English dictionary. A time limit should be set in advance and will vary with the level of the class.

Procedure

1. Compile sets of three or four words referring to a gesture, facial expression, sound, or body movement. One of the words should differ from the others in terms of how it is regarded in a specific English-speaking culture, for example, the United States or Australia, or for the part of the body to which it refers. A thesaurus may be useful for this purpose.
2. Reproduce the list on a handout to be given to each student or group. The list can also be written on the blackboard.
3. Ask the students to study each set of words and select the one word that differs from the others.
4. At the end of the time allowed, ask students to compare and discuss their choices with other groups and, finally, as a class. Reasons for making their choices should also be discussed.
5. You or the students should then define or explain the words in each set.

Caveats and Options

1. Ask students to indicate whether a word carries a positive, negative, or neutral connotation in their culture by marking a + (plus),

– (minus), or / (slash) above each word in a set. Compare their answers with the cultural connotations of the word in the target culture. The instructor should be prepared to describe a situation in which the action or sound occurs.

2. A similar activity can also be carried out using sets of words that describe personalities or physical appearance.

Appendix: Sample List of Nonverbal Forms of Communication

1. slap, caress, pat, spit
   (The odd word is *spit* because it is not done with the hand.)
2. burp, hiccup, cough, sneeze
   (The odd word is *sneeze* because it is the only one done with the nose.)
3. wave, clap, wink, salute
   (The odd word is *wink* because it is not done with the hand.)
4. shrug, kiss, pout, smack
   (The odd word is *shrug* because it is not done with the lips.)
5. wink, roll, stare, lick
   (The odd word is *lick* because it is not done with the eyes.)
6. slurp, swallow, chew, sip
   (The odd word is *chew* because it is the only one done with the teeth.)
7. giggle, sob, snicker, chuckle
   (The odd word is *sob* because it is not a form of laughter.)
8. sniff, gasp, pant, groan
   (The odd word is *sniff* because it is the only one done with the nose.)

Contributor

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The Story Behind the Picture

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Use words in context

Class Time
25 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Picture
List of verbs

Caveats and Options

Contributor

Procedure

1. Select an interesting picture, around which an unusual story could be developed.
2. Give students a list of about 10 verbs to use in the story. Choose words that are a little unusual and not too obvious.
3. Ask the students to work in groups and to develop a story around the picture, one that uses the words you have given them. Tell them their story should involve at least two people. They should make notes to use in telling their story. They must use all the words on the list at least once.
4. Set a time limit. Then have a student from each group tell the group's story. Other groups can ask questions. Which group has the best story?

Have groups write out their stories and attach them to the wall.

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Multiple Meanings

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop awareness of the multiple meanings of words
Develop a strategy for selecting the relevant meaning for a particular context

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
List of words

Caveats and Options

Procedure

1. Write on the board a list of 5–10 words that could be used in various contexts, for example: *court, decision, king, foul, rival, strategy.*
2. As the students, with the aid of a dictionary if necessary, supply the various parts of speech and meanings, write them beside each word on the board.
3. Ask the students in pairs or small groups to create a scenario or describe a situation using all of the words. With the above list, students could imagine a scene from a tennis match, a basketball game, or a castle in ancient times, among others.
4. Have each pair or group describe its scenario to the class. With the above words, one group might describe a scene of *court* intrigue: The good *king* has a *rival* who has performed *foul* deeds. The king needs a *strategy* to defend his throne and must make a *decision* soon.
5. Add two or three more words to the list and ask the students to define these words and explain how they affect the scenarios described. For instance, adding the words *referee* and *overtime* to the list above narrows the possible scenarios to one involving a basketball game.

This optional activity can be used alone or adapted to make an excellent prereading exercise:

1. Select several key words from the reading and ask students to find the various meanings. With these words, students guess the topic of the reading. Add more key words, and ask the students to determine if the added words change their hypotheses.
2. Have the students explain the relevant meaning of each word for the topic of the reading.

143

In either of these variations, the activity promotes students' awareness of the multiple meanings of words. Students not only increase their vocabulary of certain words but, more importantly, they learn about the interdependence of word meanings: The meaning of a word relevant to a particular use depends on and affects the other words in the discourse. This provides students with a strategy for selecting the appropriate meanings for words they encounter in communication.

Contributor

Christine Schuler Alvarado teaches at the University of Panama in Chiriquí.

Creating Minidomains

Levels
Any

Aims
Relate new words to semantically similar ones

Class Time
5–10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Psycholinguistic studies show that related words, such as words for colors, are stored together in the mind. Adjective opposites (*hot, cold*) and words that are semantically related to them (*tepid, fiery*) are also stored in clusters. Teaching techniques that use the natural storage and retrieval systems of the mind are more effective and efficient. One such technique is described below.

Procedure

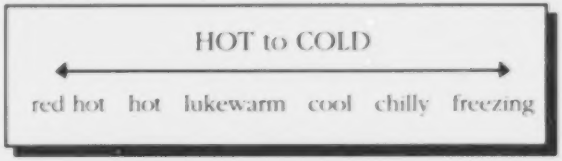
1. When a student asks about the meaning of a word, for example, *ecstatic*, elicit from the class other words with similar meanings (*glad, cheerful, overjoyed*).
2. Write them on the board. Then add other level-appropriate words, phrases, and idioms that you think of on the spot (*elated, joyous, in hog heaven*). This is a minidomain.
3. While or after generating the domain, ask meaningful questions using the vocabulary. (e.g., *What makes you feel sunny? How would you feel if you won the lottery?*)

Caveats and Options

1. Expand the minidomain. You and your students can add words that are opposite in meaning or that express gradients of meaning (*elated, sunny, sad, depressed*). Some domains can be greatly expanded; others are more limited.
2. Help students understand important differences among the words (*happy* is a rather neutral word, *ecstatic* is a strong word, *on cloud nine* is informal/conversational).
3. Have students work in small groups to put the words from the minidomain into categories. This works especially well with noun domains.

Words for bodies of water (e.g., *pond, puddle, sea, lake, ocean*) group into categories (e.g., *large/small, salt/fresh, moving/stagnant*).

4. After class, use a thesaurus to further develop the minidomain. Create a chart that illustrates the relationships among the words to clarify meaning for the students.



5. Create follow-up exercises to help students learn and retain the words.

The more you work with minidomains, the easier it becomes to create them. Don't give up if it seems difficult the first time you try it. Teaching vocabulary through minidomains helps students learn many new words quickly and easily. Students connect new words to words they already know. They also learn the differences among similar words, which helps them make appropriate word choices. Finally, students learn to view words as components of a lexical network rather than as isolated items.

Contributors

Dee Ann Holisky, Sherry Trechter, and Kathryn Trump all teach at George Mason University in Virginia, in the United States. They are the authors of a vocabulary text, Walk, Amble, Stroll, *published by Heinle & Heinle.*

Teaching Vocabulary Through Word Domains

Levels
Any

Aims
Study by using semantic fields

Class Time
1 hour

Preparation Time
1 hour

Resources
None

Teaching vocabulary effectively begins with building on what students already know. By opening a concept in the students' minds and having them call up familiar words related to the concept, you are preparing them to add new words to their lexical networks. The new words can be presented in the form of a word domain. A sequence of exercises will then help students store the words in long-term memory and finally use the words as their own. This progression of activities based on a word domain (semantic field) is a great leap beyond giving students lists of unrelated words.

Procedure

1. Choose a theme or concept from a reading passage. Decide what the focus word for this concept will be. For example, if you are going to talk about horror movies or read about phobias, the focus word might be *afraid*.
2. Before class, create a domain for this focus word using a thesaurus. Depending on the level of your class, present as many or as few of the words that mean *afraid* as you think are appropriate. Illustrate the degrees of being *afraid*. An example of a word domain for *afraid* is given below.

Less ← → More

WORRIED	AFRAID	TERRIFIED
worried	afraid	terrified
nervous	scared	horrified
tense	frightened	panic-stricken
uneasy	fearful	scared stiff
not at ease		petrified
ill at ease		paralysed (with fear)
uncomfortable		frozen (with fear)
skittish		
jumpy		

Informal Expressions:
I had butterflies in my stomach.
My hair stood on end.
It sent a shiver down my spine.

3. Before handing out copies of the domain to your students, get them ready to focus on the concept *afraid* by asking questions such as: ***When do you feel afraid? What happens to your body when you feel afraid?*** Then present the domain to the class.
4. To help students put the new words into short-term memory, create one-step manipulative exercises: multiple choice, Hangman Game, scrambled letters, categorizing words (e.g., by degrees of being *afraid*), or recreating the domain.
5. At this point, students are ready for some problem-solving activities. To put a new word in long-term memory, they need to understand its meaning and use it to solve a problem. Problem-solving activities include matching words and situations, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, or vocabulary games. They should require students to go beyond simply matching the word to its meaning. Example: Hiro thought he saw a ghost. His face turned white and he was speechless.

Was he *uncomfortable* or *frozen with fear?* (See also Sense or Nonsense, the activity following this one). These exercises lead to class discussions that clarify word meanings.

6. Now that students have handled the words and made decisions using the words, they are ready to make the words their own. You and your students can generate some communicative, open-ended questions and activities for writing, discussion and interviewing. For example, ask students to write or talk about how they feel just before they have to take the TOEFL test. They can interview classmates and/or native speakers about some cultural aspects of fear. For example: *How do you feel about the number 13 or black cats?*
7. Periodically review the words with games, practice, and discussion.

Contributors

Dee Ann Holisky, Sherry Trechter, and Kathryn Trump all teach at George Mason University in Virginia, in the United States. They are the authors of a vocabulary text, Walk, Amble, Stroll, *published by Heinle & Heinle.*

Sense or Nonsense?

Levels
Any

Aims
Store newly learned words in long-term memory

Class Time
10 minutes

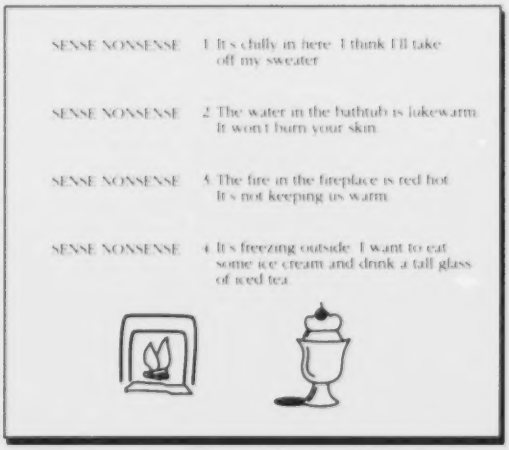
Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
None

Students easily forget newly learned vocabulary. This exercise promotes retention by asking the students to use the new words to solve a problem. Research has shown that this helps put the new items into long-term memory.

Procedure

1. Before class, create sentences using new vocabulary items. These sentences should either make sense or be nonsense. For example, if the students have learned words for *hot* and *cold* (see the previous activity, Creating Minidomains), you can create the following sentences. (The sentences can be as humorous or serious as you want them to be. A little whimsy makes the exercise more fun for students and teachers.)


SENSE NONSENSE 1. It's chilly in here. I think I'll take off my sweater.
SENSE NONSENSE 2. The water in the bathtub is lukewarm. It won't burn your skin.
SENSE NONSENSE 3. The fire in the fireplace is red hot. It's not keeping us warm.
SENSE NONSENSE 4. It's freezing outside. I want to eat some ice cream and drink a tall glass of iced tea.

2. Hand out the sentences in printed form for homework or for small-group or individual work in class. You may want to read them aloud by the teacher for listening practice.

   This activity leads to productive discussions. For example, in Number 1, the difference between *chilly* and *warm* can be discussed as well as the verb phrases *take off* and *put on*.
3. When the students have become familiar with this type of exercise, ask them to create their own sense-nonsense sentences. These student-created sentences can be used in class or collected, typed, and handed out the next day as an exercise or even a quiz.

Contributors

Dee Ann Holisky, Sherry Trechter, and Kathryn Trump all teach at George Mason University in Virginia, in the United States. They are the authors of a vocabulary text, Walk, Amble, Stroll, *published by Heinle & Heinle.*

♦ Collocations
Containers

Levels
Any

Aims
Review names of such things as substances, foods, drinks as well as the phrases used to refer to containers of each thing, such as a vase of flowers, a box of matches

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Pictures or worksheet

Procedure

1. Find pictures of things for the students to work with, or prepare a worksheet with a list of nouns for different kinds of familiar things. For example: *flour, coffee, flowers, shirts, oil, toothpaste, sugar, paper, paint, milk, shampoo.*

2. Give students a list of container words. For example: *tube, jar, carton, vase, pile, bowl.*
3. Ask students to work in groups and make as many combinations as they can, using container phrases and names of things. Set a time limit of about 5 minutes.
4. Check around the class to see what combinations the students have produced. Correct any unacceptable or unusual combinations they may have come up with.

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

Matching Activity

Levels
Any

Aims
Study new vocabulary in useful contexts

Class Time
20–30 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Small cards

This matching activity provides learners with an enjoyable way to practice using newly learned words in sentences. The competitive nature of the activity ensures that valuable verbal interaction occurs over the correct meanings of words.

Procedure

1. Divide the students into groups of four.
2. Each group receives two sets of 16 cards. One set consists of cards with a newly learned word written on one side. The other set consists of cards with a sentence with a missing word. Each word from the first set fits one of the sentences in the second set.
3. The students place the two sets of cards face down on a table in two separate blocks of 16 cards.
4. Explain the following rules to the students.
   - The first student turns over one card from each set.
   - If the group agrees that the word fits the sentence, the student keeps both cards and takes another turn. If the group agrees that the word does not fit the sentence, the student returns the two cards to their original position face down.
   - The second student takes a turn.
   - The activity ends when all the pairs have been found.

Caveats and Options

1. Take care to think up sentences that give contextual clues to the identity of the missing word. Each sentence must be able to match with only one word.
2. Substitute dictionary meanings for the incomplete sentences.

Contributor

David Hirsh gained an MA from Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand, in 1993. He has taught in New Zealand and Thailand.

 153

Collocation Bingo

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Extend collocational knowledge

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Bingo cards
Prepared word lists

Nearly every kind of collocational activity involves a matching task of words that collocate. In this case, the collocational task has been embedded in a bingo game to improve motivation and also to increase the number of collocational pairs that can be covered. For every *called* prompt word, students have to consider collocational possibilities with most of the 25 words on their bingo card. Also, the class has to judge the validity of the winner's pairs of words. This kind of attention can lead to the type of deeper cognitive processing that promotes learning. If there is any debate about the fitness of a collocational pair, so much the better, because negotiation also leads to deeper processing and fosters information retention.

Procedure

1. Develop a list of 30 or more pairs of words that collocate. Collocational word pairs can be taken from a passage that has been read or from words that have already been taught, but take care to limit the number. One side of this list becomes the "called" word list, and the words on the other side are "card" words to be written on the blank bingo cards. Bingo cards with 25 empty squares should be prepared before class.
2. Give each student one card.
3. Write the card word list on the blackboard and ask the students to fill in their squares with those words in a random order. This should ensure that every bingo card is slightly different.
4. Read words from the called list, and if a student thinks that it collocates with a word on their card, they write it in the same square under that word.

5. When a student gets a bingo, read the five winning word pairs and let the class decide if they match well. If a majority of the class agrees, that student wins. A winner can also be required to use the word pairs in a sentence.
6. The game is then played for second and third places.
7. Finally, the object is to get a "blackout bingo," where every square is filled. This guarantees that almost all of the collocational pairs will be used.

Caveats and Options

Prepare several versions of bingo cards with the card words already written in the squares. This method saves writing time in class, and also allows you to fix the arrangement of the words on the cards so that almost all of the collocational words can be called before someone gets the first bingo.

Appendix: Sample List

The following example shows a list with 30 collocational pairs and two possible game cards. The 25 words on each card vary and are in a different order. Note that the arrangement of the words on the cards is designed to prevent a bingo until relatively late in the game.

Called List	Card List	Called List	Card List
ice	cream	tie	tightly
fire	truck	spend	foolishly
guitar	string	strong	coffee
color	photograph	heavy	weight
cassette	tape	wind	blows
knife	cuts	pen	writes
ball	bounces	bright	sun
green	leaf	furry	animal
nylon	stockings	cold	winter
argue	loudly	pretty	baby
aeroplane	flies	brake	stops
whisper	softly	candle	lights
front	door	tall	building
shirt	sleeve	chef	cooks
telephone	booth	clear	glass

Card 1

bounces	cooks	stockings	animal	cuts
sleeve	cream	writes	foolishly	stops
blows	winter	building	tape	sun
glass	photograph	baby	weight	string
door	tightly	truck	lights	flies

Card 2

animal	photograph	softly	glass	bounces
loudly	sun	writes	cream	building
cuts	foolishly	cooks	door	tightly
lights	truck	coffee	blows	string
baby	stops	stockings	winter	sleeve

Contributor

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Collocation Dominoes

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop knowledge of and practice in using collocations

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
30 minutes initially

Resources
A set of collocation dominoes

Collocation might be described as an instinctive reflex of the native speaker, but for the nonnative speaker, it involves difficult decisions concerning word coverage and relies on extensive exposure to the language. The element of competition in a game of collocation dominoes will encourage the quick reactions necessary for fluent use.

Procedure

1. As the name of the game suggests, collocation dominoes operates in a similar way to the traditional game so first you need to make the dominoes. There are two types of dominoes needed. One type is marked with words that can function as either nouns or verbs. Here are some examples:

The other type of domino is marked with one adjective and one adverb. Here are some examples:

Compile a stock of about a hundred dominoes because this gives a wide range of words. I originally collected these words by drawing

up a list of nouns/verbs from the indexes of current course books and then asking native speakers to provide collocating adverbs and adjectives for those nouns/verbs. The two types of domino can be color differentiated in some way, and it is worth taking steps to make the dominoes durable for repeated use.

2. To start a game, place the dominoes face down and shuffle them. The players each take 10 dominoes. The way the game proceeds is for each player in turn to place one domino next to another so that adjacent words collocate correctly; the dominoes should be placed end to end.
3. Every time a player puts down a domino and claims a collocation, they have to justify their claim by using the collocation correctly in a sentence. Enforce a 60-second time limit when players cannot make up their mind which domino to use. If the time limit is exceeded, the collocation or the justification incorrect, the player must take a domino from the general stock. The winner of the game is the first to use up all the dominoes in his or her possession.

Contributor

Wendy E. Ball is a tutor at the Institute for Applied Language Studies at the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom.

Using Shareware Software to Enhance Vocabulary Knowledge

Levels
Any

Aims
Reinforce knowledge of collocations

Class Time
2 hours per week

Preparation Time
Initially high

Resources
An IBM compatible PC for every two students
Eclipse Shareware disk

Caveats and Options

In this activity, students have to guess at the missing words in a text in much the same way as in a cloze exercise. The students have to use their knowledge of collocation to predict the missing words. To test a prediction, they type in words to fill the available gaps.

Procedure

1. Type the text into *Eclipse* and print out a copy of the full text. Give a photocopy to each student, then read and discuss the text in class. The texts should consist of no more than 19 lines (approximately 250 words) and should contain vocabulary items being taught at that level. Students often type their own texts on to the computer and challenge other students to rebuild them.
2. Choose how much of the text is going to be visible to the students on the computer screen. Then have the students compete in pairs to see who can correctly predict the greatest number of words. Display the results for each student when the exercise is finished.

1. *Eclipse* is a text rebuilding program written by John and Muriel Higgins, similar to commercial versions, but with some additional features. It is a piece of shareware: cheap computer software available for about $5 a disk. This is the cost of a trial copy. If you are satisfied with it you may then register for a further fee which is very reasonable. One distributor is Seltec. *Eclipse* is on disk MGH1289.
2. The great strength of *Eclipse* is its flexibility. You can leave or omit function words, first and last letters, long words, short words, determiners and pronouns, capitalized words, numbers, prepositions and conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs. You can choose to display dashes

for the missing letters or may prefer to not indicate the size of the words.

3. Students can play against the computer, against another student, or by themselves. They can see the whole text at any time or ask for free words.
4. The optional analysis displays the time spent, the amount of time the text was revealed to the student, and how many words were correctly predicted.
5. The texts that students rebuild need not be the same as the texts they have previously read. In this case the exercise will be more demanding.
6. Please note that texts should always be added to a master copy and then transferred to other machines, otherwise the menu of texts will not be the same on each machine.
7. Another useful shareware program, also available from Seltec, is *DoubleUp* which reinforces knowledge of collocation and sentence order. A knowledge of MSDOS editing is needed to tailor it to your students' needs.

Seltec Addresses:

In The United Kingdom: Britsel Data Services, Albert House, 10 Albert Rd, Bournemouth, BH1 1BZ.

In Australia: Box 15/2B Grosvenor St, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022.

In New Zealand: Box 943, Nelson.

Contributors

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♦ Enriching Meaning and Productive Use
Mind Benders

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Become familiar with lateral thinking and phrasal verbs

Class Time
5–10 minutes

Preparation Time
How clever are you?

Resources
Overhead projector (OHP) and transparencies

Mind Benders are a useful way to get students thinking in English. They can be used as warm-ups or when waiting for the class to start. They are a good way to get intermediate level students experimenting with vocabulary and can also be used as an introduction to idioms to demonstrate how we do not have to take words literally. They also encourage students to develop their visual memory.

Procedure

Some examples of mind benders are as follows:

Mind Bender		Meaning
LE EL	=	split level
KNEE LIGHT	=	neon light
R\E\A\D\I\N\G\	=	reading between the lines
DEATH — LIFE	=	life after death
STAND I	=	I understand

1. Prepare five or six Mind Benders on a transparency or write them on the board (without the meaning).

2. Give an example of the first one or two and show how the words have been written according to their literal meaning.
3. Ask the students to think what the others could mean. After a few minutes, take some suggestions from the class before telling them what the meaning is.

Some other examples are:

Mind Bender		Meaning
MIND MATTER	=	mind over matter
HE'S/HIMSELF	=	he's beside himself
R ROAD A D	=	crossroads
LOOK/LEAP	=	look before you leap
CYCLE CYCLE	=	bicycle

Caveats and Options

1. Once the students get used to the idea of trying to find the expression through the words, they get very interested in this activity. But they do need some examples and some time to get started.
2. It is useful to try out your Mind Benders with colleagues first to see how easy or difficult they are. Once the students get used to the activity you can ask them to give you some ideas of Mind Benders and use them at the beginning of each lesson.

Contributor

Lindsay Miller is a lecturer in the English Department at City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. He has taught English in Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia for the past 14 years.

What Is It?

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Individualize the revision of vocabulary

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Activity sheet

Procedure

1. Prepare a sheet containing several sets of sentences such as:

   It is like water.
   Everybody has it.
   It is warm when it belongs to people.
   It is cold when it belongs to a fish.
   It is usually red.
   It is in your body.
   What is it?

2. The learners work on the sheets in their own time and at their own speed. They mark their work from an answer key.

Caveats and Options

1. Arrange the sentences in a set so that the first sentences do not give a lot of information.
2. This activity can be used to teach vocabulary if the actual word is used instead of *it*. The learners respond by writing the L1 translation of the word.

Contributor

Paul Nation is Reader in Applied Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

More Than Meaning

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop awareness of the range of associations a word can have

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Grids

There are many other kinds of word knowledge besides meaning. This activity is designed to have students focus on other kinds of word knowledge that are not often given attention. It is intended as an enrichment activity for words that have already been introduced. To fill in the blanks, students must carefully consider and analyze the connections the target word has with other words. This should lead to the kind of deeper processing that facilitates learning. It is organized as a group activity to encourage cooperative learning where weaker students can learn from better ones. Although this activity can use a considerable amount of class time, students are learning much more than the selected target words. They are considering numerous words as answer possibilities. Also, this activity encourages students to think more broadly about what it means to "know" a word, giving them a better sense of the kinds of word knowledge they should be trying to develop.

Procedure

1. Before this activity can be used, teach the students about the different kinds of word knowledge. It is probably necessary to use nontechnical definitions when explaining these concepts:

   Meaning: The general meaning of a word
   Part of speech: Is the word a noun, verb, adjective etc.?
   Derivative forms: Other members in a word family (e.g., *act*, *active*, *actively*, *action*)
   Synonyms: Words with a similar meaning
   Antonyms: Words basically opposite in meaning
   Collocates: Words that frequently appear together
   Superordinate: The name or description of a group of things (e.g., *anger, jealousy, hate, love* → *emotions*)

Coordinates: Members of a concept group, such as the four emotions above

Subordinates: Types or varieties of whatever the word is (e.g., *vehicles* → *cars*, *buses*, *trucks*)

The last three categories may best be taught with some type of tree diagram to illustrate their interrelationship.

2. For each group, make a worksheet by drawing a cross-hatch design on a piece of paper. In each section, write as many numbers as there are groups. If you will have a large number of groups, you may want to limit the answer spaces in each section to five. Write a different target word at the top of each sheet. In class, draw a master chart on the blackboard to show the students which category of word knowledge goes in each worksheet section. It will look something like this, although the definitions should be the same as you used in your explanations:

meaning	coordinates	part of speech
superordinates	synonyms	derivative forms
subordinates	antonyms	collocates

3. Divide your students into groups.
4. Then give each group one worksheet and tell them they have a set amount of time (e.g., 5 minutes) to complete as many sections as possible. They can put more than one answer in each section.
5. When that time is over, rotate the sheets between the groups. Ask each group to try to answer as many sections as possible, writing on Line 2. They may of course look at the answers on Line 1 and agree with them or try to come up with better ones. When time is up, rotate the sheets again, the answers going on Line 3 and so forth. If there are more than five groups, there will be some sheets that every group will not have a chance to work on. Having every group use a different colored pen is helpful in keeping the answers separate.

6. When the answer sheets are completed, have each group in turn read off the answers written down on the sheet they last worked on, section by section.
7. The class decides which answers are correct, but you have the final say if there are any problems.

Caveats and Options

If the activity is to be played as a game, then points can be given with the teacher keeping a running tally on the blackboard. If two or more different answers are correct, the groups who wrote them get points. When a correct answer is duplicated, the first group to have written it gets the point. The winning group is the one with the most points after all the sheets have been evaluated.

Appendix: Sample Worksheet

SHY

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Contributor

Norbert Schmitt is a lecturer at Minatogawa Women's College in Hyogo, Japan. His main interests are L2 vocabulary acquisition and vocabulary testing. He is currently researching the effects of various types of word knowledge on vocabulary acquisition.

Demonstrating Nuances

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Examine positive, negative, and neutral connotations of words

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Lists of synonyms (see Appendix below)

The value of this exercise is that students see that no two words ever have the exact same meaning; rather, each word has its own connotations depending on situations and cultural contexts. For example, most U.S. women would probably rate *thin* as positive, but students from other cultures could consider it negative. As a result, differing cultural attitudes can be explored in relation to these concepts.

Procedure

1. Give the students a list of synonyms.
2. Tell them to work together in groups to decide if the synonyms have a positive, negative, or neutral connotation.

Appendix: Sample List

Look at the following synonyms and decide if each word has a negative, positive, or neutral connotation:

1.	slim	skinny	thin	slender
2.	old	elderly	ripe	wrinkled
3.	ignorant	uninformed	illiterate	unaware
4.	poor	needy	broke	homeless
5.	nurse	servant	slave	maid
6.	strange	unusual	rare	odd
7.	cheap	thrifty	careful	frugal

Contributor

Vickie Safari has an MS in TESL and teaches in Georgia State University's Intensive English Program. She was a Fulbright Lecturer in Pakistan during the 1991–1992 academic year.

Follow Your Character

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Focus on a particular type of vocabulary

Class Time
30 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Video segment

Students pool their knowledge of vocabulary and create a coherent passage describing one character's activities in a video passage. When video is used for language learning purposes, students' often focus on just the dialogue. This activity is a way of focusing students' attention on a different set of vocabulary items. By reducing the volume and giving each group a specific character and giving each group member a specific part of speech, the cognitive load is significantly reduced. This enables students to focus on aspects of the video passage and hence vocabulary that they would not focus on with more listening-based approaches.

This type of cooperative group work encourages students to pool their knowledge of vocabulary and teach each other. There is a considerable amount of interaction and negotiation of meaning that takes place as students work to create a paragraph to present to the class.

Procedure

1. Choose a section of video from 20 seconds to 1 minute in length that has a lot of action and several characters.
2. Split the class into enough groups so that each group has one character to watch.
3. Each person in the group should watch the character and be in charge of taking note of the vocabulary related to one of the following categories: (a) actions, (b) objects, (c) descriptions of objects or people, and (d) descriptions of actions.

   Play the video two or three times. Turning the volume off might help the students focus on the task.
4. The students' task will be to pool their vocabulary and from this group of words create a complete description of their character's role in the scene.

5. Have them write a paragraph for one of the group members to then read to the class.

Appendix: Sample Student Text

The following is an example from the introduction to "The Simpsons," a popular U.S. TV show, which I have used in my class.

First Bart leaves school on his skateboard. He is wearing a yellow striped shirt and short pants. He drives dangerously past three people on the sidewalk. Homer throws away a green radioactive rod that almost hits him. Finally, Bart jumps over the car and goes into the house and sits on the old couch with the family.

Contributor

Eric Bray is Academic Director at the Kyoto YMCA English School, in Japan.

Story Retelling

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Turn receptive vocabulary into productive vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
10–15 minutes

Resources
Story

This activity allows teachers to create interesting vocabulary lessons that incorporate the language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students focus on a topic while gaining productive vocabulary knowledge.

Procedure

1. Choose a true, interesting, and short story. Consider all available forms of the media as possible sources. Do not write the story and plan to read it; natural language and spontaneous elaboration aid comprehension.
2. Select 5–10 useful target words from the story that the students might know receptively but not productively. The words should be relevant to the central meaning of the story.
3. Write the target words on the board in the order you will use them. Answer any questions about the meanings of words briefly. At this point the students should have a basic receptive knowledge of the words.
4. Send half the students (Group 1) outside the room or out of earshot. Tell the story to the remaining students (Group 2), using the target words in the order listed. If the story includes names, dates, or other specific pieces of information, write them on the board. Clarify as needed. Direct student attention toward the words on the board as you use them. Let the list serve as a reminder of the sequence of the events in the story.
5. Group 1 returns and each student is assigned a partner. Partners from Group 2 tell the story, using the words on the board as a guide for both speakers and listeners. Group 2 tries to pass on the same meaning as the teacher's version of the story, using the target words and explaining as needed.

6. When the pairs are finished, review the story to check comprehension. Follow up with activities based on the message of the story. Encourage students to use the target words in all phases of the activity.

Caveats and Options

Story Retelling can be followed by any of these activities.

1. Mock interviews: Students ad lib TV news interviews with one or more witnesses of this event.
2. Letter writing: Students write imaginary letters (a) to an investigator from the FBI, seeking further information, or (b) to one character in the story from another.
3. Next Chapter: Students speculate in a discussion or in writing about what happened next.
4. Discussion: What can be done to protect public places like the World Trade Center from terrorist attack?

The value of this technique is that students can be guided from a receptive to a productive knowledge of a word while focusing on a topic of general interest. The activity might be used as preparation for a related activity or adapted to use with a given vocabulary list. If the activity is working well, the students will be busily using the target words in original expressions while focusing on the content.

Appendix: Sample Story Assignment

Directions: Tell the story in your own words. Target words are italicized.

In February of 1993 the World Trade Center in New York was the *site* of the most *destructive terrorist* act yet to occur on United States soil. An *explosion* occurred near noon on a busy work day, leaving a five-story crater. The 110-story Twin Towers swayed as windows exploded, ceilings *collapsed* and fires broke out. At least 6 people were killed. Over 1,000 were injured. Thousands of businesses were *paralysed* for several weeks while the *investigation* and cleanup took place. This attack occurred when a rented moving van carrying *sophisticated* explosives was left in a lower-level parking garage by a group of *terrorists*.

Contributor

Cheryl Boyd Zimmerman teaches at the American Language Institute at the University of Southern California in the United States.

Discovering Meaning Constraints

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
See the differences in L1 and L2 use of particular words

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
List of uses of a word

Procedure

A major obstacle to learning vocabulary well is the understanding of the constraints on the uses of a particular word. Unsophisticated learners have a tendency to give to a newly acquired word all the meanings of the word their L1 associates with it. Thus, Japanese learners of English, having learned *osieru* means "to teach," will then tend to overgeneralize its use and produce incorrect sentences such as "I *taught* him that there was a meeting" because *osieru* is also used for "tell" in the sense of give information.

With groups of students sharing a common L1, the problem is easily overcome if one has no objection to using explicit contrastive analysis. One can simply explain the constraints on the use of a particular word compared to those of its acknowledged counterpart in the L1. However, if the class is heterogeneous in terms of the L1, this solution is not practical. One can still, nevertheless, exploit the principles of lexical contrastive analysis by encouraging students themselves to use it.

1. Explain the principles of lexical contrastive analysis at the beginning of the course by using such examples as that of *osieru* and *teach* as discussed above. This teaches students to be wary of overgeneralization and also prepares them for comparing the constraints on the meaning of the target language words with those of the counterpart word in their L1.
2. Choose a word and prepare a list of sentences that contain a range of uses of that word.
3. Instruct the students to examine the uses and work out the constraints compared with those of the counterpart word in the L1.

Caveats and Options

1. It is a good idea to have students check their answers in a bilingual dictionary.

2. If this problem solving is done as a regular activity, students are able to build up their own minidictionaries and put their acquired knowledge of constraints into practice, providing you offer opportunities for regular use.

Appendix: Sample Sentences With the Verb *see*

I *saw* a man biting a dog yesterday.
I can *see* the sea from my house.
The boss wants to *see* you tomorrow at 2.
Ah, yes, now I *see* what you mean.
Has she been *seeing* anyone since her divorce?
I can't *see* him as president; he's too inexperienced.
I could *see* there was trouble in store for the newlyweds.
I'll *see* you home after the dance if you like.
We *saw* them off at the station.
I'll *see* you. (as in poker)

After you have made sure that all the students understand the meaning of all the sentences, ask them to think of the L1 word they associate with *see* in the first sentence. They should then find the other uses of *see* which correspond with their L1 word and write a summary as follows:

> *See* may only be used as an equivalent of my L1 word in the following contexts: . . .

You can extend the scope by also having the students deal with those cases where *see* is not equivalent to their L1 word.

Contributor

Ronald Sheen teaches in the Faculty of Education of Tottori University, Japan.

Vocabulary Ranking

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Explore word meanings

Class Time
10 minutes

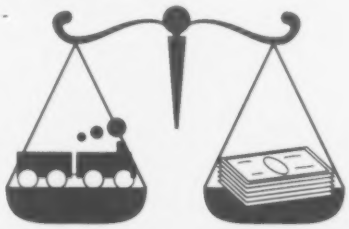
Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Ranking activity

Procedure

1. Make a ranking activity based on a word that is useful for the learners. The word may be one from a text that the learners are working on. Here are some examples:

   The word *journey* has many parts to its meaning. Rank the following ideas according to their importance for the meaning of *journey*.
   - Traveling for a long time
   - Going from one place to another
   - Going a long distance
   - Going to another country
   - Involving difficulty
   - Involving mechanical transport



   Collapse. When things collapse, they may affect a lot of people's lives both directly and indirectly. Rank the following items according to the number of people they would affect if they happened in your country.
   - collapse of the transport system
   - collapse of the banking system

- collapse of the government
- collapse of law and order

2. Give the activity to the learners to do in small groups.
3. Get the groups to report and justify the result of their ranking to the rest of the class.

Contributor

Paul Nation has taught in Indonesia, Thailand, the United States, and Finland.

Part IV: Developing Vocabulary Strategies

Editor's Note

Strategies for coping with vocabulary include guessing from context clues, using word parts, learning vocabulary in isolation using cards and mnemonic techniques, using dictionaries, and using paraphrase and other procedures to make up for gaps in production.

These strategies enable learners to be independent of teachers and specially prepared texts. They are very important in dealing with the thousands of unknown low frequency words that the learner of English may encounter. This gives these strategies an importance that justifies spending a lot of time on making sure that they are well learned.

Guessing from context is the most important of the strategies. It is the way native speakers most often expand their vocabulary. Research on the strategy makes the following points:

1. Second language learners need to know at least 95% of the running words in a text for guessing to be largely successful (Liu Na & Nation, 1985).
2. Guessing correctly does not necessarily lead to learning (Mondria & Wit-de-Boer, 1991).
3. Learning through guessing is probably a cumulative process for most words, with successful guesses generally resulting in small increments of word knowledge (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985).
4. Wrong guessing does not seem to inhibit or interfere with later learning of a wrongly guessed word (Mondria & Wit-de-Boer, 1991).
5. Guessing that results from interpreting the language context of an unknown word probably leads to more learning than guessing from background knowledge of the topic (Haastrup, 1989).

The first three activities in this section focus on guessing from context. According to Roberts (1965), about 60% of the low frequency words of English come from French, Latin, or Greek. A large proportion of these words can be broken into parts consisting of affixes and stems. Some of the affixes occur very frequently in English words and thus deserve special

attention (Bock, 1948; Stauffer, 1942). It is generally dangerous to use word parts to guess the meaning of a word, but a knowledge of word parts is particularly useful for checking if a guess from context is correct, and for helping fix a newly met word in memory. Awareness of word parts also has the effect of reducing the number of new words to learn. If *destine* and *pre-* are already known, then *predestined* requires much less learning effort. To make effective use of word parts, learners must be able to recognize and know the meanings of the most frequent affixes, and they must be able to see how the meaning of the affixes is related to the meaning of the whole word.

The development of vocabulary learning strategies requires increasingly spaced practice over a period of time. It is of little use to teach a strategy that is poorly understood and has not reached the level of fluent use. Guessing from context for example requires practice over several weeks so that learners are able to use it without causing a major interruption to their reading. The benefits from being able to use this strategy well are so great that the time given to learning is well repaid.

It is useful to have a systematic and organized approach to vocabulary knowledge. The activities in this section that focus on keeping a vocabulary notebook and getting students to teach each other are very good steps toward this.

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♦ Guessing Words in Context
Nonsense Words

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
See the value of using contextual clues

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Passage with nonsense words and questions

Teachers often try to convince students that they do not need to resort to the dictionary for every unknown word they encounter; however, students are often not easily convinced of this fact. The value of this exercise is that students see for themselves that it wastes time to look up every unknown lexical item because a reader can get an approximate meaning based on contextual clues. Most students also find this exercise lots of fun.

Procedure

1. Introduce the concept that it is often possible for readers to understand the approximate meaning of new words from contextual clues, and it is thus unnecessary to look up all new words in the dictionary.
2. Students then read a short narrative that contains "nonsense" words. It is usually necessary to emphasize that the text contains made-up words that are not real and that it is impossible to look them up in a dictionary.
3. Give the students some questions after the reading to allow them to use the nonsense words as if they were real.
4. Allow the students to discuss the questions and their answers in small groups. The students should understand that the questions must be answered using the nonsense words because the objective is not to translate the nonsense words but to use them naturally as any new lexical item is used.

Contributor

Vickie Safari has an MS in TESL and teaches in Georgia State University's Intensive English Program in the United States. She was a Fulbright Lecturer in Pakistan during the 1991–1992 academic year.

Learning From Examples

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop skill for guessing from context
Develop productive knowledge of vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
None

Very often, students find it hard to understand the meaning of a new word (particularly a word that entails abstract concepts) without looking it up in a dictionary. Even when the dictionary provides an explanation, learners may still be unable to grasp the full sense of the word and use it appropriately. The technique suggested here helps to address such problems.

Procedure

1. Provide several sample sentences containing the same unknown word.
2. Tell the students to guess meaning from the context provided by the examples. Here is an example teaching *accident*:
   a. Yesterday an *accident* happened to him. A car ran over him when he was crossing the road.
   b. Last week, an *accident* took place in a construction site. The crane suddenly fell down and hit two workmen who were passing by.
   c. Children easily become victims of *accidents* that occur at home. Every year, among hundreds of patients in the children's hospitals, there are those who have been burned by boiling water carelessly placed in the kitchen, those who have swallowed chemicals mistaken for soft drinks and those who have nearly been electrocuted after poking their little fingers into the plugs.
3. Keep on giving examples until the students can respond by saying the word in their first language or show their comprehension by providing further appropriate examples.

Caveats and Options

1. Summarize either orally or by writing on the blackboard all the useful information related to the word, such as part of speech, semantic

properties, register, collocated words, and other features so that students may enter the information into their vocabulary notebooks for future reference.

One of the advantages of using this technique is that it allows the learners to make intelligent guesses from a meaningful context. This will make the learning task much more active, interesting, and challenging than direct explanation of words. Another advantage is that the examples provide input on the semantic properties, register, and even collocation of the word taught. In the above example, the teacher may help the students to draw their own inference that *an accident* normally entails an element of suddenness, unexpectedness, and misfortune. It is used both in spoken and written English, but more often in a serious tone. The collocated words are *happen*, *take place*, *occur*. This will give the learners a better understanding of the usage and use of the word taught. It could be particularly useful in teaching abstract words. The second part of the technique, that is, asking students to offer more examples, is an effective way of checking comprehension and interpretation and provides a smooth transfer from reception to production.

Contributor

Judy Ho teaches in the English Department of the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

If You Know What It Means, Prove It

Levels
Any

Aims
Guess the meaning of words from their use in context and then use words in original sentences

Class Time
10–20 minutes

Preparation Time
10–20 minutes

Resources
List of high frequency words
A few sentences for each word

It is very easy for learners to look up words in a bilingual dictionary and restrict their understanding of a word to the first entry in the dictionary. Understanding additional meanings, collocations, and uses of the word in idioms is important for developing depth and breadth in learners' vocabulary.

Procedure

1. Divide the students into teams and explain the rules of the game.
2. Write a word on the board and then use it in a sentence or two. For example: *Waste: It is a waste of money to buy expensive shoes for a baby. Don't waste your time watching TV when you should be studying.*
3. Tell students to raise their hands if they think they know the meaning of the word and, when called on, to use the word in an original sentence. If the sentence uses the word correctly, the respondent's team receives two points. If the use is incorrect, or too ambiguous, the team receives nothing and the game continues until someone uses the word correctly.
4. Continue until you have used all the words, or until a designated amount of time is up. Tally the points and declare a winner.

Because this activity spends a lot of time on each word, it is a good idea to limit its use to high frequency words or words that your particular group of students need for specific purposes.

Contributor

Kenny Harsch is Director of English Education at Kobe YMCA College, Japan. He is interested in learner autonomy, student-centered curriculum development, and helping students discover their own uses for English. He also believes in developing students' ownership of the direction their learning takes.

Guessing From Context

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Practice a guessing strategy

Class Time
30–40 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Text
Strategy guide sheet (see Appendix below)

I decided to focus on guessing meanings from context with my reading class. Instead of asking my class to copy the meanings from the dictionary of words they do not know and write sentences using these words, I started to talk to them about using their "microscopic eyes," "microscopic minds," and "strategies."

The goal of this exercise is to figure out the approximate meaning of the unknown word by using different strategies with the aid of their microscopic eyes and minds. Of course, I do tell my students that sometimes they will have to use the dictionary.

Procedure

1. Assign an article. Then, in class, ask the students to point out some words they do not know. Do not allow them to look into the dictionary before doing this exercise.
2. Distribute a vocabulary strategies handout (see below), talk about each strategy, and give ample examples. Some students start to divide words in any way they want to, such as (the purported) suffix **-us* in *unconscious* or prefix **glan-* in *glance*. This discussion helps them to understand what affixes are.
3. In the exercise, have students follow very explicit instructions. Ask them to

- copy the sentence where the word is
- underline the word that they do not know the meaning of
- explain in at least five sentences what strategies in the text guide them to the approximate meaning of the word
- give the meaning
- check the dictionary to see if their approximate meaning is close or not.

Do this exercise with groups, pairs, and individuals.

4. As a group activity, have them write their responses on the board and then review each group's work. Sometimes each group discusses a different word from the article; at other times, they may have the same word. One group may discover strategies that the other groups do not.

Caveats and Options

1. Students tend to look at the general picture; they sweep through an article so fast that they fail to look at certain details for all kinds of reasons. But they should be able to do both—to start asking questions about what they "see" in what they read.
2. This exercise also helps students in another way. Students often say, "I know what it means, but I cannot explain it." Their use of the English language is limited to words, phrases, or short sentences. This exercise forces them to "explain" what is in their minds.

Appendix A: Samples of Student Work

"Five minutes after the bell rang for afternoon class, the Middle-Aged English teachers gradually trickled into the classroom and argued with each other for a few minutes" (from *Iron and Silk* by Mark Saltzman, p. 53). The words I don't understand are *middle-aged* and *trickled into*. Middle-aged is an adjective. I think that *middle* means centre. Human beings could live for one hundred years. Therefore *middle-aged* means 50 years old. *Trickled* is a verb in this sentence. Because of the preposition *into* after the word *trickled* this indicates to me that the person is coming into the classroom. I think that *trickled* means to enter.

(A Haitian-Creole-speaking student)

"When the Communists came and liberated our village, I remember our village people welcomed the soldiers" (from *Iron and Silk*, p. 57). The word is *liberated*. In this case it is a verb. Because of the conjunction *and* between *came* and *liberated* this shows me that those two words are synonymous. But the *liberate* meaning in this sentence is more complex. I think that *liberated* means to free because the village was happy to welcome the soldiers.

(A Spanish-speaking student)

Appendix B: Strategy Guide Sheet

Strategy Guide Sheet

1. Use your "microscopic eye" and "microscopic mind" to look for details.
2. Look for affixes (prefixes and suffixes) in the word.
3. Look at punctuation marks.
4. Look at parallel structures.
5. Look at parts of speech.
6. Look for clause connection clues (conjunctions, transitional words, etc.).
7. Look for meaning relationships in sentences (cause-effect relationships,definitions, cohesive markers).
8. Read the sentences before and after.
9. Read the whole paragraph for context.
10. The more strategies you have in your hands, the more chances you will be able to guess the meaning.

Reference

Saltzman, M. (1986). *Iron and silk.* New York: Vintage Books.

Contributor

Nancy Duke S. Lay, Professor of ESL, teaches at City College, City University of New York, in the United States.

♦ Word Building
Word Family Practice

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Extend use of derivational suffixes

Class Time
5–10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

It is useful to make learners aware of regular rules and features that can be generalized in the future, thus making subsequent learning easier for the student. If the main derivational suffixes of English are learned, this can help give the student access to the other members of a word family, even though only one member may be initially learned. This simple activity is intended to raise students' consciousness about this fact, and to give them practice in manipulating the parts of speech of different members of a word family.

Procedure

1. When a new word is introduced, write it on the blackboard along with its part of speech.
2. Ask the students to give (or guess if they don't know) the other related words in the word family along with their parts of speech and write them on the blackboard also. Point out the regular suffixes that signal different parts of speech.

After this activity is used a few times, some students may begin to realize that they already know many words that are related to the newly introduced words. This should encourage them to look for derivational relationships in the future. When the students can formulate the derivations on their own, this activity can be used occasionally to remind them to continue thinking in terms of word groups.

Contributor

Norbert Schmitt is a lecturer at Minatogawa Women's College in Hyogo, Japan. His main interests are L2 vocabulary acquisition and vocabulary testing. He is currently researching the effects of various types of word knowledge on vocabulary acquisition.

Peer Teaching Prefixes

Levels
Advanced

Aims
Learn important prefixes

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
List of prefixes with their meanings and example words
List of meanings of the prefixes in a different order

Procedure

1. Form the learners into pairs. One person in a pair will be the teacher and the other will be the learner.
2. Give each learner who is acting as the teacher the list of prefixes with the meaning and the example words. Here is an example of part of a list.

ad-	to(ward)	admit, advance
com-	together, with	composition, concentrate
dis-	not	disagree
ex-	out, beyond	extract

3. Give each learner who is acting as a learner the list of meanings. Here is an example of part of a list.

   not
   to
   out
   with

4. Show the "teachers" the following procedure for teaching the other learner.
   - Say the prefix two or three times and then say an example word.
   - The learner has to look at the list of meanings and choose the right meaning.
   - If the learner does not choose the right meaning by the third attempt, the teacher tells the answer.
   - Before moving on to a new prefix, revise the ones just practiced.

Contributor

Paul Nation is Editor of this volume.

Word Building

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop knowledge of word forms
Extend the range of meanings for known words

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
None

Procedure

1. Choose a set of words or forms to work with. These could be prepositions, prefixes or suffixes, phrasal verbs (e.g., the preposition *against*; or the suffix *-ful*).
2. Ask students to form groups and to think of many ways in which the word can be used. In the case of *against*, for example, students might produce:
   Lean against the wall.
   I'm against your suggestion.
   For and against.
   It's against my expectation.
   I'm not against what you say.
   It's against the law.
3. Set a time limit and let students use their imaginations. By pooling their resources, they should be able to generate at least six or more examples.
4. Ask groups to read out their examples. Give further explanations concerning usage. Correct any unacceptable explanations and give reasons.

Caveats and Options

After all the examples have been gathered, get the class to classify them into meaning groups or to find the underlying meaning of the item.

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

Prefixes: A Word Game

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Learn prefixes

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
1 hour

Resources
Cardboard, scissors, felt-tip pens

This game helps in follow up work in guessing meanings of words from context, in using the meanings of prefixes to confirm a guess. The game also helps beginners review parts of speech.

Procedure

1. Cut up cardboard into equal sizes about 5 centimeters x 3 centimeters (about 2 inches x 1 inch). The number of pieces depends on the size of the class, but there should be 16 pieces for every group of four.
2. For each group, print on the cards:
   - four words beginning with prefixes you want learners to know
   - the meanings of the words
   - the parts of speech of the words
   - the meanings of the prefixes
3. Tell each member of the group to take four cards, one from each of the categories above. The aim for the group is to make four sets of four cards.
4. Have each learner contribute a card from each of the categories above in order to complete each set. Learners do not look at each other's cards but describe them to each other.

Caveats and Options

When the set is complete, learners can place the word in context by making up sentences using the words. Groups can also exchange cards with other groups who may have other words and prefixes. When learners become familiar with the prefixes, the class can have a competition as to which group is able to make up the set and write four correct sentences, either first or within a limited period of time.

Contributor

Nikhat Shameem teaches at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. She is researching the maintenance of the Fiji Hindi language in New Zealand.

Word Formation Game

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Study four processes of word formation in English
Practice creating words

Class Time
45–60 minutes for 15–20 students

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Optional handout (see Appendix below)

Students have no difficulty understanding the patterns of word formation, and in fact frequently invent existing but unfamiliar words. This game requires students to work in teams which are told they cannot use real words as game entries. To comply with this rule, team members are forced to exchange information about existing vocabulary in the process of producing new words.

Procedure

1. Divide the class into teams. The game works most effectively if teams have equally mixed English proficiency levels.
2. Explain the following word formation processes (McManis, Stollenwerk, & Zheng-Shen, 1987) to the class:
   a. An acronym is the result of combining the first sounds or letters of principle words in a phrase. *Radar* is an acronym for "radio detecting and ranging," while *scuba* represents "self-contained underwater breathing apparatus."
   b. Blending is a process that combines parts of existing words to produce new words. *Clash* is derived from "clap" and "crash"; *because* came from "by" and "cause."
   c. Compounding combines entire words to produce new vocabulary items, such as *flashlight*, *doorknob*, and *headache*.
   d. Clipping produces short words from longer words, such as *phone* from "telephone" and *gas* from "gasoline."
3. Have each team gather and make as many words as possible using the processes. After approximately 20 minutes of deliberation, one member of each team writes the team's entries on the blackboard.
4. Ask the class as a whole to decide if each entry follows a rule of word formation. Teams must supply definitions. The teacher or any

class member may note whether the entry is an existing word. A team wins by making up the largest number of new words. Students usually need to be reminded that the point of the game is to create words, not to list familiar vocabulary. A team must have entries in all categories and be able to give definitions for each entry.

Caveats and Options

Give one point for known words and two points for well-made created words.

Appendix: Optional Handout for Students: Word Formation Game

Directions

1. The purpose of this game is to explain some of the ways that new words enter the English language. You can increase your vocabulary by understanding the patterns of word formation.
2. The teacher will divide the class into teams.
3. Team members make up new words to fit the word formation rules. The team that makes up the most words wins. Every word must follow a rule of word formation. (Some of the words will turn out to be real words anyway.)
4. A team cannot win unless it has made up at least one word for every category.
5. Be prepared to give a definition for each word your team creates.
6. After you have worked with your team for 20 minutes, one person from each team will write its list of words on the blackboard. The class as a whole will decide if each entry conforms to a rule. The teacher is the judge in case of a difference of opinion. Real words will be identified at this time.

   Category A—Compound words are new words created by combining two existing words, such as *flashlight* (flash + light), *rainbow* (rain + bow), *toothbrush* (tooth + brush), and *doorknob* (door + knob).

   Category B—Acronyms are the result of combining the first sounds or letters of important words in a phrase. *Radar* is an acronym for "radio detecting and ranging." *Scuba* comes from "self-contained underwater breathing apparatus."

Category C—Blending is a process which creates new words by combining parts of other words. *Clash* is derived from "clap" and "crash." *Because* is a blend of "by" and "cause."

Category D—Clipping produces new words by shortening an existing word, such as *phone* from "telephone" and *gas* from "gasoline."

Reference

McManis, C., Stollenwerk, D., & Zheng-Sheng, Z. (Eds.). (1987). *Language files* (4th ed.). Reynoldsburg, OH: Advocate Publishing Group.

Contributor

Michele Kilgore is an ESL instructor at Georgia State University in the United States. She has a MS in Applied Linguistics and is working on her doctorate.

Find the Prefixes and Suffixes

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Recognize suffixes and prefixes

Class Time
10–15 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
A variety of short (five-paragraph) newspaper articles

Caveats and Options

Contributor

Lists of prefixes and suffixes can help students to build up their vocabulary and are especially useful for "creating" words needed in composition writing.

Procedure

1. Give each learner a different newspaper article.
2. Tell the learners to make a list of all the prefixes and suffixes they find in their article. The affixes must be put under appropriate headings of noun, verb, adjective and adverb.
3. When they finish, tell them to swap articles with each other.
4. Organize the learners into pairs to compare notes on the suffixes and prefixes found. Points in dispute may be clarified by the teacher.
5. At the end of the exercise, tell the learners to add any new suffixes or prefixes learned from the exercise to their own personal record of suffixes and prefixes, under appropriate parts of speech.

1. It helps if students know some prefixes and suffixes from previous learning.
2. Get all the learners to use the same article and compare notes. The exercise may take less time to finish, and the teacher may go over it with the class, rather than use peer tutoring.

Maria Verivaki studied at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and now teaches English in Greece.

♦ Using Dictionaries

Using the Dictionary: Common Words, Uncommon Usage

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Practice using a dictionary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
A learners' dictionary, such as *Collins COBUILD*, or the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*

This activity draws attention to words with an easy, or frequent, surface meaning, but which are being used with a less frequent, unusual, or rare meaning in a text. Learners are likely to be aware of the common or frequent meaning of the word but unaware of the special usage. The activity combines two independent learning strategies: guessing from context, and, using a dictionary.

Procedure

1. Draw attention to a common word that is being used in an uncommon way in a text. For example, from a magazine on home decorating: *The walls were painted in pale terracotta, with the door mouldings* picked out *in a rich shade of aqua*. The learner identifies a similar example in a reading text.
2. Model the procedure for dealing with these for the learner.
   - Use the guessing from context procedure (Nation, 1990) to come to an estimate of the meaning.
   - Check the guess by looking up the unusual usage in a learner dictionary under the common form. Read through the various entries under the common form until a matching meaning is found.
   - Other examples that the teacher might model are:
     He was *picked up* by the police for questioning.
     She entered the church, and felt the cold *flags* under her hot and tired feet.
     He came home *plastered* after the party.
     This year, Wimbledon was won by the number three *seed*.

3. The learners follow the teacher's model independently.
   - The learners apply the procedure for guessing from context to the unfamiliar item.
   - Once they have reached the stage of guessing the meaning, they check their guess by looking the word or phrase up in a learner dictionary. In the above example: *The walls were painted in pale terracotta, with the door mouldings* picked out *in a rich shade of aqua*. *Picked out* can be found on p. 1078 of *COBUILD* as a separate entry under *pick*. The appropriate meaning is the second listed under *pick out*: "If part of something that is painted is *picked out* in white or in a bright colour, it is painted in that colour so that it can be clearly seen beside the other parts. e.g. . . . *mouldings picked out in white*."

Caveats and Options

Ask the learners to prepare an example of these types of word usage for sharing with their classmates.

Reference

Nation, I. S. P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. New York: Heinle & Heinle.

Contributor

Mary Boyce teaches at the English Language Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Think, Consult, Compare

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop dictionary skills

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Dictionaries

Procedure

1. Give the learners a list of words and get them to write them done one side of a page with four additional columns drawn across the page.
2. Tell them to write their meaning for the word in the first column, an example using the word in the second column and the dictionary definition in the third column. They should not fill the third column for a word until they have filled the first column.
3. Tell the learners to look carefully between the meaning they gave in the first column and the dictionary meaning.

Caveats and Options

1. Add another column for the first language translation(s).
2. Set out the first column like a definition, for example

   An *octagon* is a _____ that _____ .

Contributor

Dorothy Brown has trained teachers of English and taught English in New Zealand, Australia, China, Malaysia, and Samoa.

Using the Dictionary to Produce Sentences

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Develop dictionary skills

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
English-English learner dictionaries

Dictionaries are usually used to find out the meanings of unknown words. However, learners' dictionaries contain a great deal of information that learners can use to use vocabulary productively. This activity develops this skill.

Procedure

1. Write an unfamiliar word on the blackboard and tell the learners to form groups.
2. Tell the learners to follow these steps to gather information about the word that will help them write an original sentence containing the word.
   a. Find the meaning of the word
   b. Use the grammar notes and examples in the dictionary to find out about the grammar of the word.
      - What part of speech is it?
      - If it is a noun is it countable or uncountable?
      - If it is a verb, does it take an object?
   c. Look at the examples and note the similarity in their sentence patterns.
   d. Copy these patterns to write a new sentence.
4. Have each group write its sentence on the board and discuss the results.

Contributor

Paul Nation's interests include the teaching and learning of vocabulary and teaching methodology.

Using a Dictionary of Synonyms

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Distinguish synonyms
Use a monolingual dictionary

Class Time
30–45 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Dictionary of synonyms
Page from a reading text or previous student writing assignment
worksheet (see Appendix below)

This activity is to introduce the students to a helpful vocabulary learning tool, a dictionary of synonyms. The students will also be made aware of the need to make distinctions among largely synonymous words.

Procedure

1. Show the students a dictionary of synonyms. Invite the students to suggest one English word to look up.
2. Ask one student to look up the word the others suggested. Write four or five synonyms for the word on the blackboard. Ask the students to suggest any differences between the synonyms.
3. Pass out a text (either a previously completed student writing assignment or a short selection from a reading task) with one key word marked. Have the students complete the worksheet on the word marked.
4. After completing the activity, ask the students to repeat the same procedure with other words from the text.

Caveats and Options

Instead of working alone, the learners can be divided into groups of three or four. Ask them to work together on a key word.

Appendix: Sample Worksheet: Distinguishing Synonyms

1. Write down the key word from the reading text that you will look up in the dictionary of synonyms. Next to it, write at least three words of which this key word reminds you.

_____ _____

_____

2. Look up the word in a dictionary of synonyms. Write four synonyms on the lines below. Next to each word, explain the difference between it and the key word written in No. 1.

A _____ _____

_____

B _____ _____

_____

C _____ _____

_____

D _____ _____

_____

3. Write down one of the five words above that you feel best fits the context. Explain why.

_____

Contributor

Hugh Rutledge graduated from Boston University in 1988. He has taught in East Asia for several years and is Head of Faculty at Tokyo International College in Japan.

♦ Giving Learners Control
Learners' Choice

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Become involved in lesson planning

Class Time
None

Preparation Time
5 minutes

Resources
Small pieces of paper

Contributor

The ideas behind this procedure are that learners, particularly at intermediate levels and above:

- differ with regard to their knowledge of words
- differ with regard to their vocabulary needs
- are capable of deciding which words they want to know and how well they want to know them
- are more receptive to words that they themselves have chosen for review

Procedure

1. Place small piles of cut up scrap paper within easy reach of all learners.
2. Tell the learners to write words or phrases that occur in the lesson and that they would like to review in class on these small slips of paper, one word or phrase per slip. If appropriate, they can also be asked to indicate (with an *A* or a *P*) whether they would like this item to become part of their active or passive vocabulary.
3. Collect accumulated slips at any time and incorporate them in the ongoing lesson, or else use them as the raw material for a vocabulary recycling/review activity in some later lesson.

Heather Murray teaches at Universität Bern in Switzerland.

Keeping a Vocabulary Book

Levels
Any

Aims
Learn how to keep a useful record of new vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
A blank pocket-sized book with strong covers

Students often have difficulty remembering new words or phrases they encounter in their reading or in other language classes. Many students find it useful to keep a vocabulary book in which they record and classify words which they want to remember.

Procedure

1. Show the students how to organize the new vocabulary that they put into their book. Words can be organized in three ways.
   - Write down all the new words from one unit of a book together on the same page.
   - Organize the words alphabetically, like a dictionary.
   - Keep sections of the book for different topics or areas, such as hobbies, sports, or for phrases.
2. Encourage the students to record more than just a word's meaning, or translation. These points can be considered.
   - Is it a noun, verb, or adjective etc.?
   - If it is a phrase, has the whole phrase been entered?
   - Will an example of the word in context be helpful?
   - Is there any other useful information about the word?
3. Provide time for the students to review their entries regularly, to help remember new words.

Contributor

Ronald Jackup is a freelance ESL teacher and writer.

Student-to-Student Vocabulary Teaching

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Take responsibility for own learning

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Procedure

1. In the first lesson, demonstrate how students should keep a vocabulary notebook. While there are numerous techniques for doing this, for the purposes of this activity it is suggested that a word with one or two roots and several different forms be used. For example, *manipulate* can appear like this:

   Forms

   V N person adjective adverb
   manipulate manipulation manipulator manipulative
   manipulatively
   Roots
   man(i) = hand, by hand pul = to pull
   Words using the root
   manufacture
   manage
   manual

   Context of occurrence

   People manipulate the movements of puppets by pulling strings attached to the puppet.
   Lobbyists try to manipulate the political process from behind the scenes.
2. Assign students words and ask them to replicate the analysis you modeled.
3. As homework, assign one or two students for each lesson to bring in two words to teach their classmates using the techniques above.

There are two differences, however, in how they are to teach their classmates. Firstly, the context of occurrence should be the actual occurrence, in other words, where the students actually came across the words. This may be in an advertisement, a graded reader, or the newspaper. The point is that students make the effort to expose themselves to authentic English outside the classroom. Secondly, students report the following information when teaching the word:

- Where they were when they found the word
- What they were doing at the time
- Who they were with
- What the date and time were
- Where they first recorded the word
- Why they thought the word was valuable

4. The students teach the words, roots and context as a minipresentation in front of the class. It works well as a warm up and before and after breaks.
5. Keep a record of the words taught and periodically give quizzes. The students can often be helped into remembering the words by reminding them of the context in which they were learned.

Contributor

Patrick Colabucci teaches and develops curricula for Japanese companies.

Vocabulary Cards

Levels
Any

Aims
Learn new vocabulary

Class Time
15 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Small cards

Caveats and Options

Contributor

Using vocabulary cards is a word learning strategy for independent learning in or out of class. On one side of the card is written the word to be learned. On the other side is the word's meaning, usually in the form of a first language translation.

Procedure

1. Show the learners how to make and learn from cards. When learning from cards they should keep changing the order of the cards, use mnemonic tricks to fix the meaning in their mind, look at the cards at spaced intervals rather than spending a long amount of time in one go, and make sure that similar words are not in the same group of cards.
2. The learners make 10–15 cards each day and keep a record of their progress.

1. If learners prepare their own cards, you may wish to check the words they choose and the translations.
2. The students can exchange cards they have already studied.
3. In addition to a translation, the cards could contain a context for the word.

David Hirsh gained an MA from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, in 1993. He has taught in New Zealand and Thailand.

The Keyword Technique

Levels
Any

Aims
Discover a way to improve the learning of new vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
None

Caveats and Options

Contributor

The keyword technique involves associating the new word with a similar sounding word in the L1. The technique works in this way. Imagine the learner wants to learn the English word *salary*. The learner thinks of a word in the L1 which sounds like *salary* or sounds like the beginning of the word *salary*. For an Indonesian learner of English, this L1 word might be *salah*, which means "mistake, error, or wrong." This first language word is the keyword. The learner now imagines the meaning of the English word *salary* and the meaning of the Indonesian keyword *salah* joined together. For example, the learner might think of someone being paid the wrong salary, or being paid a salary for doing things wrongly.

Procedure

1. Describe the technique and demonstrate its use with a personal example in a language you have learned.
2. Select several words and write them with their meaning on the blackboard. Have the students think up their own keywords and images.

1. This technique can take time and practice to develop. Learners may need encouragement if they have difficulty in choosing keywords or making associations.
2. Keywords can be made from known L2 words instead of only L1 words.

David Hirsh gained an MA from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, in 1993. He has taught in New Zealand and Thailand.

In Other Words (A Paraphrasing Game)

Levels
Any

Aims
Practice paraphrasing

Class Time
10–30 minutes

Preparation Time
20–30 minutes

Resources
Word cards

Paraphrasing is a very useful strategy for learners of a second language. It helps them to explain to their interlocutor what they mean when they cannot think of the right word in the second language or are trying to explain the meaning of a word of their native language.

Procedure

1. Write some of the following on the board (whichever you feel are useful for your class):
   It's a THING that ...
   It's a PERSON who ...
   It's a PLACE where ...
   It's an IDEA that ...
   It's a GROUP of ...
   It's a KIND of ...
   It's SOMETHING you do when ...
   It's THE WAY you feel when ...

   Tell the students they can substitute a more accurate word for the word in capital letters (e.g., "It's a book that has words" instead of "It's a thing that has words"), but the capital letter words are there to fall back on if they can't think of a substitute word.
2. Show students the word cards and explain that each card has a word on it. You will describe a word from a card, using one of the openers on the board, and they have to try to guess the word.
3. Put students into teams, draw a card and paraphrase it. If nobody can guess correctly, give further paraphrases of the word until someone guesses. Give that student's team one point, and go on to the next card.

4. After you feel the students are comfortable with the game, have the student who guessed the last card come up and give a paraphrase of the next card, and so on until time is up. (An alternative would be to have each student come up in turn and paraphrase a word from a card.)
5. Count the points for each team and declare a winner.

Contributor

Kenny Harsch is Director of English Education at Kobe YMCA College, Japan. He is interested in learner autonomy, student-centered curriculum development, and helping students discover their own uses for English. He also believes in developing students' ownership of the direction their learning takes.

Part V: Developing Fluency With Known Vocabulary

Editor's Note

It is not sufficient to have a large vocabulary. Learners must be able to access and use this knowledge fluently. Fluency is being able to make the most effective use of what is already known. This comes from having a well-organized system of knowledge that has been well practiced in meaningful activities. For vocabulary learning, this means that learners should have plenty of opportunity to make use of known vocabulary over the range of language skills and in a range of contexts.

The most suitable activities for fluency practice are ones in which a substantial part of the requirements of the task are already within the experience and capability of the learner. This happens if

1. the activity uses familiar language items. That is, the vocabulary and grammatical constructions required in the activity are already known by the learner.
2. the content matter of the activity is familiar. That is, the learner is quite at home with the ideas that are involved in the activity. This can occur if the learner is drawing on knowledge from the learner's own culture, from previous experience, from preparation before the activity, or from planned experience activities such as visits, watching films, or project work before the main activity.
3. the organization of the discourse and the activity itself are already familiar to the learner.

When the language, ideas, and discourse in an activity are already familiar to a learner, and when the activity itself is already familiar, learners are able to give their attention to improving the level of skill with which they perform the activity. This enables them to make use of the vocabulary in the activity with a higher than normal level of fluency.

Activities that contain many unfamiliar elements are likely to produce hesitant, uncertain language use.

This section is the shortest one in this book because it is here that vocabulary learning overlaps most of all with developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For a much wider range of activities to develop fluency with vocabulary through use, it is necessary to look at the other volumes in the New Ways series.

Vocabulary Exercises

Levels
Beginning

Aims
Develop familiarity with the written form of known words

Class Time
10 minutes

Preparation Time
20 minutes

Resources
Prepared exercises

The acquisition of new words is only the first step in the process of vocabulary learning. The students must subsequently learn to recognize these words in another context and learn to use them on proper occasions. Whether one can remember and use words learned previously largely depends on frequent practice. For this reason, teachers must give ample practice in using the words they teach in drills.

Sample Exercises

1. Recognition of the right word

Look at the following word list. A "test word" is followed by four other words, one of which is exactly the same as the test word. Read as fast as you can and underline the word which is the same as the test word.

quiet:	quite	quilt	quill	quiet
mild:	mile	milk	mild	mill
beer:	peer	beer	deer	dear

2. Word-pair recognition

Look at the following list of phrases. They are in pairs. Some of them are exactly the same, some are not. Read them quickly, write S if the two phrases are the same, and D if they are different.

a. poor man poor men (D)
b. next stop next stop
c. good book good boot

3. Word matches

Find the words that are exactly the same in spelling in the two columns, linking the word pair with a pencil:

either	whether
neither	whither
whether	either

weather wither
wither neither
whither weather

4. Recognition of the meaning of words

Look at the following word list. A "test word" is followed by four other words. Underline the word that is nearest in meaning to the test word.

easy: busy lazy simple ready
big: small middle large little
ship: boot boat sheep bus

5. Recognition of words according to their prefixes and suffixes

a. Mark the parts of speech of the following pairs of words:

(v) (n)

sing—singer	each—teacher	weak—weakness
dark—darkness	quick—quickly	slow—slowly
translate—translation	lock—unlock	tell—retell
care—careful	meaning—meaningless	

b. Match the words in the two columns that are most closely related:

sing	swimmer
dance	teacher
teach	singer
write	traveller
play	dancer
swim	writer
travel	player

Even at the earlier stages of reading, some idea about word formation would be helpful to increase the students' word power. The temptation to talk systematically and volubly about word formation, however, should be resisted at this stage of learning.

6. Filling the blanks with the appropriate words

I first met Mr. Lee _____ he was working at the Central TV University, _____ at the time was the _____ important educational center in China. Mr. Lee introduced me to some of his colleagues _____ were working with him on the new English course. I looked at the work _____ Mr. Lee's colleagues were doing. Since then, Mr. Lee and I _____ met several times, and he _____ shown me some books _____ have helped

me in my own work. Mr. Lee is one of the _____ helpful people _____ I have ever met.

Contributor

Zhang Decong is Lecturer in English and Dean of the English Department at Hanzhong Teacher's College, China. He has taught English for more than 30 years and has published widely in China. His interests include research on grammar, lexicology, pragmatics, and applied linguistics.

What Did They Say?

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Practice the spoken language

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Dialogue of 20–30 lines

Caveats and Options

Contributor

Procedure

1. From the dialogue, choose 12–15 segments of remarks. Then omit the selected segments and write out the passage.
2. If it is necessary, write a few lines to give the students a guide to the context and the characters concerned.
3. Make enough copies for the whole class.
4. Distribute copies of the dialogue to the students. Tell them to read it through and put down suggestions for the missing segments.
5. After 10 minutes, ask them to form small groups and compare the suggestions they have noted. They should also record any new ideas that come up in their discussion.
6. Invite each group to call out its suggestions. Put these on the board.
7. Review the different suggestions and correct any mistakes or inappropriate ideas.
8. Reveal the original wording.

In preparing the material, there are many ways of giving a particular language focus to the activity. You could, for instance, concentrate on the use of correct vocabulary, the use of correct verbs/verb tenses, or other structures relevant to the focus of your class.

Matilda Wong teaches in the Department of English in the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Say That Again

Levels
Intermediate

Aims
Practice known words in context

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
15 minutes

Resources
Two lists of sentences

The Say That Again game has proved extremely popular and effective with diverse groups of learners.

Procedure

1. Divide the class into two teams.
2. Choose representatives of both teams to read the sentences, each of which forms half of a simple conversational exchange. Put numbers corresponding to the sentences in a grid on the board.
3. Select a number and have the student representative read the corresponding sentence.
4. Select a second number. If the two sentences "match" (i.e., form a logical pair), award a point, cross off the numbers, and allow the same team to continue. If they do not match, the other team gets a turn. (No writing is allowed as this would enable players to simply reproduce the answer key, thereby defeating the purpose of the game.)
5. Play continues in the above manner until all pairs have been found and successfully matched; if one team is trailing by several points, the last play can be made a "bonus" to allow for a dramatic, come-from-behind victory. (Awarding a million points heightens the dramatic effect and ends the game on a delightfully silly note.)

Caveats and Options

If decontextualized practice of individual words is desired, the same format lends itself equally well to this purpose; pairs consisting of L1 and L2 equivalents or of L1 words and L2 definitions simply replace the sentences in the above procedure.

Contributor

Richard Dean teaches in Japan.

Using Maps for Practice

Levels
Intermediate +

Aims
Practice prepositions and other vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
10 minutes

Resources
Large town plan or map
Smaller copies of the map
Counters representing objects

Introduced as a teacher-directed activity, the exercise is easily used in pair and group work.

Procedure

1. Provide the students either with a large-scale town plan indicating names of buildings, streets, and other features or a large-scale ordnance survey-type map marked with geographical features such as rivers, hills, roads, and villages. Also give the students counters or chips marked with the names of the objects they represent, such as *car, horse, house, village, shop.*
2. Pin the map on the board or wall so the class can see it.
3. Ask questions based on the map. The learners write the answers.
   - What is the name of the highest mountain?
   - Which is the nearest village to the mountain?
   - Which river is ... village on?
   - Which store is opposite the bank?
   - How many traffic lights are there on ... Street?
4. Get the students to place the counters on the map according to instructions, such as the following:
   - Park two cars on ... Street.
   - Put a horse in the field behind the church.
   - Place a house next to the library.
   - Position a village where the River ... and the River ... meet.
   - Place a village between the two highest mountains.
5. Students can then come to the front to carry out the instructions on the wall map in order that all the class may check what they have done.

Caveats and Options

1. For a variation on this exercise, give the students a blank piece of paper with which to create a map. The points of the compass are assumed to be conventionally placed. Give instructions as to where to draw features; however, if the class is sufficiently advanced, students may also take turns in giving instructions. Examples might be:
   - Draw a coastline at the eastern edge of the map and color the sea blue.
   - Draw a river (A) across the map from west to east. The river is going to the coast in the east.
   - Draw another river (B) starting from the northwest, meeting the other river in the middle of the map.
   - Show a mountain with a circle between the two rivers on the western edge of the map.
   - Place a bridge just below where the rivers meet.
   - Place a village where the two rivers meet.
2. As this task is quite demanding, and subsequent instructions depend on the accuracy of carrying out the previous ones, it is useful to have a large blank piece of paper on the wall or board, in order to place each feature accurately after the students have had a chance to do it themselves on their own maps.

Contributor

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Listen Very Carefully

Levels
Beginning +

Aims
Become involved in producing descriptive vocabulary

Class Time
20 minutes

Preparation Time
None

Resources
Campus area outside the classroom to accommodate 10–40 people

Caveats and Options

Contributor

Procedure

1. Ask the class bring paper and pencils with them as they move from the regular classroom to elsewhere on campus.
2. Ask them to sit down, close their eyes for 2 minutes, listen very carefully, and try to remember what they hear, so that they can write out five things later on.
3. Time the exercise, and tell the class to open their eyes and in 2 minutes list five things they heard, for example: *wind blowing, noisy classrooms.*
4. Have the learners walk around for a few minutes and pay attention to the surroundings. They should note on paper five things they saw, for example: *a physical education lesson, birds resting on a tree.* Then have the learners write out five words or phrases to describe the atmosphere: how they feel and how they think living things around them feel at the time of observation, for example: *hot, very excited.*
5. When the learners have returned to the classroom, have them call out what they heard, what they saw, and how they and others felt, while you write it down on the board.
6. Suggest related vocabulary, based on the learners' descriptions.

For intermediate learners, focus explicitly on parts of speech (with the additional purpose of reviewing parts of speech):

- What they hear: List five nouns and five adjectives.
- What they see: List five nouns and five verbs or adverbs.
- Mood: how they or others feel: List five adjectives or adverbs.

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New Ways in Teaching Vocabulary

Levels
Any

Aims
Assemble, establish, enrich, and develop learner vocabularies

Preparation Time
Variable

Resources
News broadcasts, printed materials, pictures, objects, computer games, puzzles, communicative activities ...

This book will help you develop the vocabulary component of your language teaching program with more than 100 activities organized to reflect the major elements of a second language course:

- meeting new vocabulary for the first time
- establishing previously met vocabulary
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Contributors

Alvarado, Battaglia, Chor-shing, Dean, Folse, Griffiths, Halstead, Jackup, Kilgore, Le, Miller, Nation, Park, Rutledge, Spencer, Tsang, Veritaki, Wong, Zimmerman ... and many more

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